

Henry Holland Esq.

LETTERS

FROM THE

MARCHIONESS

DE SÉVIGNÉ,

TO HER DAUGHTER

THE

Countess DE GRIGNAN.

Translated from the FRENCH of the last PARIS
EDITION.

VOLUME the FOURTH.

She strikes each point with native force of mind,
While puzzled learning blunders far behind,
Graceful to fight, and elegant to thought,
The great are vanquish'd, and the wise are taught,
Her breeding finish'd, and her temper sweet;
When serious, easy; and when gay, discreet;
In glitt'ring scenes o'er her own heart severe,
In crowds collected, and in courts sincere.

YOUNG



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LETTERS

OF THE

MARCHIONESS

DE SÉVIGNÉ.



LETTER CCLV.

The Marchioness DE SÉVIGNÉ to Monsieur
DE GRIGNAN.

Paris, 31 July, 1675.



T is to you my
dear Count that I now address myself, to acquaint
you with one of the greatest and most unfortunate
losses that could ever have happened to France; it
is the death of Mr. de Turenne, which I am per-
VOL. IV. B suaded

suaded will give you as much grief and concern as it has done all of us here. The king has been afflicted in a manner suitable to the loss of the greatest general, and the best man in the world. The whole court was in tears at this disastrous news. Mr. de Condom was near fainting. Every thing was ready for setting out on a party of pleasure to Fontainebleau, but this immediately broke it off: Never was man more sincerely, more universally regretted. All degrees of people were in the greatest consternation and trouble. Every one was making enquiries, and the streets were filled with those who gathered in crowds to lament the loss of their hero. I have sent you a very exact relation of his transactions for some days before his death. After three months of a conduct almost supernatural, you are now to add the fatal day, that at once terminated his glory and his life. He had the pleasure to see the enemy's army decamp and fly before him; and the day, which was Saturday, he went up to a small eminence the better to observe their march: his intention was to fall on their rear, that about noon he wrote a letter to the king, acquainting him with his design, and that he had actually sent orders to Brisac to have the prayers of forty hours* said in the camp. He mentioned the death of young d'Hocquincourt, and added, that he would dispatch a courier to acquaint his majesty with the issue of his undertaking: He sealed this letter and sent it away about two o'clock. This done he mounts his horse, and goes up to this little hill, attended by eight or ten of the other officers, when ill fortune would have it that a random shot, fired by the enemy at a distance, took him right in

* A form of Prayer in the Roman Liturgy, so called.

the middle of his body: and then I leave you to judge what were the cries and lamentations of his army: a courier was instantly dispatched hither, who arrived on Monday, as I told you, so that the king received Mr. de Turenne's own letter, and the news of his death, within an hour of each other. Some time after arrived one of M. de Turenne's gentlemen, with the news that the armies were pretty near each other. That M. de Lorges commanded in his uncle's place, and that nothing was equal to the extreme affliction of the army. The king immediately ordered the Duke to repair thither post, till the Prince could follow in person; whose disorder, and the fatiguing length of the journey, make it to be apprehended, that it will be of bad consequence to him. Pray Heaven he may get over it. M. de Luxembourg remains in Flanders as commander in chief. The Princes, Lieutenants General, are Messieurs de Duras and de la Feuillade. The Marechal de Crequi remains as he is.

The morning after this melancholy news, M. de Louvois proposed to his majesty to repair the loss, he had sustained in this gallant leader, by creating eight generals in the room of one: This was certainly the way to lose nothing. At the same time he made eight new marshals of France, to wit, M. de Rochefort * to whom the others are indebted for their promotions, Messieurs de Luxembourg, Duras, la Feuillade, d'Estades, Navailles, Schomberg, and Vivonne; the round number

* M. de Louvois, being desirous to make M. de Rochefort a marshal of France, could not compass it without proposing the other seven, who were older lieutenants généraux than M. de Rochefort.

eight. I leave you to make your own reflections on this part of my history. The grand-master* was in despair, at being left out; but they have made him a duke: but of what service is that dignity to him? He has the honours of the Louvre already, in virtue of his place: he will not be admitted to parliament, on account of consequences; and his wife will accept of a tabouret no where but at Bouillé†; however, it carries a mark of favour with it; and, if he was a widower, it might chance to get him a young and rich widow. You know the Count de Grammont hates Rochefort. I saw him yesterday; he was ready to burst with rage: he has wrote him a Letter, and acquainted the king with it. The Letter is as follows:

MONSEIGNEUR,

“**L**A faveur l’a pu faire autant que la merite:” *C’est pour quoi je ne vous en dirai pas d’avantage.*

Le Comte de GRAMONT.

Adieu, ROCHEFORT ‡.

I fancy you will look upon this compliment in the same light as we do here.

* The Count de Lude, Grand-Master of the Ordnance.

† The Countess de Lude was remarkable for passing all her time in the country, through her extravagant fondness for the diversion of hunting.

‡ Thus English’d,

MY LORD,

Favour has done at least as much as merit §; and therefore I shall say nothing farther to you.

The Count of GRAMONT.

Adieu, ROCHEFORT.

§ A verse in the CIP.

I have

I have seen an Almanack, made at Milan, I think, where, in the month of July, you read *the sudden death of a great General*; and in the month of August, *Ah! what do I see?* We live in perfect alarms here; but, however, the six thousand men are gone to ruin our Brittany: they are two Provencals, who are charged with the commission; the Baillie de Forbin, and the Marquis de Vins. M. de Pomponne has recommended our poor lands to them. M. de Chaulnes and M. de Lavardin are in perfect despair: these are in the number of disagreeable things. If ever you play the fools in your province, I should never wish them to send Bretons to correct you. See how far my heart is from harbouring revenge.

And now, my dear Count, you have all the news that is stirring hitherto: and in return for a most amiable and pleasing Letter, I send you one which cannot fail of giving you the greatest displeasure: believe me, I am as much concerned as you can possibly be. How have we passed a whole winter in hearing relations of the virtues and amazing perfections of this hero! Never did man approach so near perfection. The more he was known, the more every one esteemed him, and the greater is their regret for his loss.

My dear children, I embrace you both cordially: I pity you, that you have no body to talk with upon this great event. It is natural to be fond of communicating one's thoughts on such an occasion. If you are grieved, it is no more than what we all are here.



LETTER CCLVI.

To Madame DE GRIGNAN.

Paris, Friday, 2 August, 1675.

ICANNOT forbear thinking, my dear, of the astonishment and grief you will have been in, at the death of M. de Turenne. The Cardinal de Bouillon is inconsolable: he learnt the news of it from a gentleman of Louvignie's, who, willing to be the first to make his compliments of condolance on the occasion, stopt his coach, as he was coming from Pontoise to Versailles. The Cardinal did not know what to make of his discourse; and the gentleman on his part, finding he knew nothing of the matter, made off as fast as he could. The Cardinal immediately dispatched one of his people after him, and soon learnt the fatal news; at which he instantly fainted away: he was directly carried back to Pontoise; where he has been these two days without eating a morsel, passing his whole time in continual tears and lamentations. Mad. de Guenegaud and Cavoit have been to see him; who are no less afflicted than himself. I have just wrote him a billet, which I think a pretty good one: I acquaint him therein, by way of advice, of the affliction you are in, both from the share you take in all that concerns him, and from the sincere esteem and admiration you entertained for the deceased hero. Pray do not forget to write to him yourself: for I think you write
parti-

particularly well upon such subjects : in this case, indeed, you have nothing to do, but give a loose to your pen. Paris is in a general consternation of grief at this great loss. We wait in the greatest anxiety for another courier from Germany. Montecuculli, who was retreating, is returned back ; and, doubtless, hopes to profit not a little, by an event so favourable for him. They say, that the troops gave a cry, that might have been heard at two leagues distance, when news was brought them of their General's death. No consideration was capable of stopping them : they demanded to be led immediately to the fight ; they were resolved to avenge the death of him who had been their parent, their leader, their protector, and defender ; that, while he was with them, they feared no danger, and were determined to avenge his death : " So lead us on," they cried, " think not to stop us ; we are bent for the fight." This I had from a gentleman who belonged to Mr. de Turenne, and was sent from the camp to his Majesty. While he was relating all this, he was bathed in tears, and all the time that he was relating the circumstances of his master's death. The ball struck M. de Turenne directly across the body. You may easily imagine he fell from his horse, and expired ; but he had just life enough left to crawl a step or two forwards, and clench his hands in the agonies of death ; and then a cloak was thrown over the body. Boissuguyot, which is the person's name who made the relation, never quitted him till he was carried, with as little noise as possible, to the first house. M. de Lorges was about a league distance from the place where the accident happened ; judge what must be his condition, when he heard of it. His is the chief loss, who must take charge of this army, and

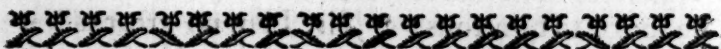
be answerable for all events, till the arrival of the Prince, who cannot join him in less than three weeks. As for me, I am thinking, twenty times in a day, of the poor Chevalier de Grignan: he certainly will never be able to support this loss, without losing his reason. Indeed, every one who knew and loved Mr. de Turenne, are greatly to be pitied.

The King said yesterday, in speaking of the eight new Marshals which had been made, that, if Guilleragues had had a little patience, he should have been of the number; but, as he thought fit to be out of patience and retire, it was very well as it was. They say, that the Count d'Estrées is looking out to dispose of his place, being in despair, at not having had a Bâton. Guess what d'Harrouës is about: he is copying word for word, and without being the least tired, all the news that I have here wrote you. I acquainted you with the Grand-Master's being made a Duke: he dare not complain; he is to be made a Mareschal of France by the first carriage; and the manner in which the King spoke to him, has done him infinitely more honour, than the dignity he has had conferred on him. His Majesty ordered him to give Pomponne his name and qualifications: "Sire, replied he, I will give him the patent conferred on my grandfather, and he will have nothing more to do, than to have that copied." We must make him our compliments. Mr. de Grignan will have a great deal to do upon all these promotions; and it is not unlikely he may make himself some enemies: for our new dignitaries aspire to the title of MON-SEIGNEUR; and will not be convinced of the injustice of such a pretension.

But,

But, to return to Mr. de Turenne. When he took his leave of the Cardinal de Retz, he spoke to him thus: " Sir, I am no great talker ; " but let me beg of you to believe me sincerely, " when I tell you, that were it not for the present state " of affairs, in which I may perhaps be a little want- " ed, I would absolutely follow your example, and " retire from the world : and I give you my word, " that, if I live to return, I will think of my salva- " tion in time ; and, as you have done, set apart " some few moments between life and death." I had this from d'Hacqueville not two days ago.

Villars is returned ; but St. Geran and his head remain behind. His wife was in hopes that they would have had some pity on him and brought him back with the rest. I suppose La Garde has acquainted you with his design of paying you a visit. I long to take my leave of him for that journey. Mine, as you know, is put off for some time. We must wait to see what effect the march of 6000 men, commanded by two Provençals, will have in our country. It is very hard for M. de Lavardin, to have given 400,000 francs for his place, and to be obliged to command under M. de Forbin ; for M. de Chaulnes still retains the shadow of first commander. Mad. de Lavardin and M. de Harrouis are the compasses whom I steer by. Be under no concern about me, my dear, nor my health : I shall take physic after the full of the moon, and news from Germany. Adieu ! my dearest child. I love you so passionately, that if any one was desirous of my friendship, they might think themselves quite happy, if I loved them only so well as I do your picture.



L E T T E R CCLVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 7 August, 1675.

DO you say, my dear, that I mentioned nothing of St. Marceau, in my description of the procession of St. Geneviève? I cannot imagine how I came to be guilty of such an omission. St. Marceau came to fetch St. Genevieve as far as her own chapel, otherwise the laws of decency had not permitted her to advance a step towards him. The shrine of this virgin saint was carried by the company of goldsmiths, who had adorned it with an infinite variety of precious stones, valued at near two millions: it was the finest thing that can be imagined. Beneath this glittering canopy appeared the beauteous saint, carried on the shoulders of her dutiful children; the monks of her order, who trod the streets with their naked feet, in all the pomp of devotion. When they returned from Nôtre-Dame, the gentleman saint re-conducted the lady, with all possible marks of civility, to a place appointed, where they parted: but can you imagine with what violence? The efforts they made to rejoin each other were such, that the number of the bearers of them was increased by ten on each side, to prevent their meeting; and if by chance they had joined hands a second time, no human force could have separated them. If you
are

are not satisfied of this, you need only ask the good citizens of Paris, who were all witnesses of it. This however was prevented; so they only made a civil bow to each other, and retired each of them to their own habitation. I wonder what my thoughts could be employed on, to divert me from entertaining you with so miraculous a tale.

As to the fire-works intended on St. John Baptist's day, I cannot think on it without being in a fright. What a folly would it be, in the condition you are in! What a crowd! What a confusion. My dear, I beg you not to speak to me of it any more.

I have acquainted you, that I am not going to Brittany. You will easily believe, that I shall not go before I have settled our correspondence by our new friend at the Post-office: we shall hear from each other twice in the week; my interest is concerned in it more than yours, and even my life. I shall carry with me books and work: These amusements will sufficiently entertain me, together with our correspondence, which is my chief care.

All the letters from the army represent things in a strange situation: But, my dear, what a terrible piece of news I have to acquaint you with!—The death—Alas! can I have the barbarity to write it to you!—the death of M. de Turenne. Every thing is in confusion: There is now no hopes of any good from Flanders, or from Germany, or of your brother's paying us a visit. We shall see in a few days how things will be ordered, what train affairs will take in your province,

and the conduct of Mr. Fourbin with his little army.

Madame de Schomberg will now become the wife of a marshal of France: for this will doubtless occasion the advancement of her husband. My son informs me, that the desolation of the army where he is, makes him comprehend the miserable condition of that in Germany: He says, they are happy however in being left under the conduct of Mr. de Luxembourg, since they have no longer the prince for their general. Poor Mad. de Vaubrun is in despair upon the death of her husband; she is much pitied. I saw the other day at mass the Count de F— and some others, who certainly cannot appear here with a good grace. I thought those mothers happy, whose sons were neither at the † Minims, nor in Germany; including myself, who have the satisfaction to know that my son is upon duty, and yet in no danger at present.

The other day the Dauphin was shooting at a mark, and shot very wide of it: Mr. de Montausier rallied him upon it; and said, pointing to the Marquis de Crequi, who shoots perfectly well, see how near this gentleman will come to the mark. The arch youth had the complaisance to shoot a foot wider of it than the Dauphin, which turned the laugh on Mr. de Montausier, who could scarce forgive him for his fraudulent piece of civility. Mr. de Grignan must very well remember this young courtier; he diverted us extremely.

I went a few days since to Versailles. The ladies about the queen are the very same, who

† A convent in Paris.

are the companions of Madame de Montespan. They play and sup together by turns, and have entertainments of music every evening. Nothing is concealed, or so much as pretended to be made a secret of; they are seen in triumph in the public walks together: and there is no appearance of discontent.

I have been at Clagny: How shall I express my admiration of it! It is the enchanted palace of † Armida. The building advances so fast, it may be discerned by the eye: The gardens are finished. You are well acquainted with † Notre's manner of gardening. He has left standing an ancient shady wood, which has an admirable effect. There is a little grove of orange-trees planted in large vases, and tall enough to supply a shade; it is divided into walks and alleys, bounded by pallisades on each side, interwove with jessemin and tuberose, and a variety of other flowers. This flowery fence, which is made breast-high, by concealing the vases in which the orange-trees are planted, makes them appear to grow out of the ground. This appearance of a natural orange grove in our climate, is the most beautiful, the most surprising, the most enchanting novelty that can be imagined: It is very much admired.

My dear, I will give you a little view of the inside of the cards, that you will be surprised with. It is, that the perfect friendship between

† An enchantress in Tasso.

† A famous gardener. It was he that made the gardens of Villars, and those of the Thuilleries, and Versailles.

Madame

Madame de Montespan, and her travelling † friend, has been for these two years an utter aversion. It is a keenness of resentment, an antipathy, a contrariety like that of white and black. You ask, from whence it proceeds: it is because the inferior friend has an haughtiness that makes her rebel against the orders of her superior. She does not love to obey; she is willing to comply with the father, but not with the mother. It is to oblige him, that she undertakes this journey, and not in the least to gratify her; she gives an account of every thing that passes to him, and not to her. He is pouted at, for having too much amity for a woman of so much vanity; but it is not thought this affection will continue, unless the aversion ceases, or the success of this voyage causes a change in the hearts of some persons. This secret has been rolling, like an earthquake, under ground, these six months; it begins a little to take air; I believe you will be surpris'd at it. The friends of the friend are much concerned at it, and it is thought that some of them have felt the ill effects of this misunderstanding. Do not you wonder how it happens that we reason sometimes without being able to comprehend how things are? I often say on these occasions, that a thread has been worked false. One is ignorant of the true situation of affairs, and can discover nothing clearly, till one sees the right side of the cards. It is the pleasantest thing in the world, to observe the mistakes of this kind.

I expect with impatience the Letters of the Chevalier de Grignan; we desire fresh ad-

† Madame de Maintenon, who at that time was conducting the Duke of Maine to the waters de Barege, purely to do a pleasure to the King, and in all the voyage gave an account of every thing directly to him.

vices every hour, for we shall always be in pain, till our army has repass'd the Rhine. I have sent you a relation of the battle of Mr. de Lorges, who has shewn himself worthy of his † uncle. Heaven grant our prosperities may always continue: I believe they are owing to the ghost of Mr. de Turenne, which still hovers about the army, and conducts it.

The Count de Lude is here: No one has ever had a thought of censuring his return; but I own to you, there are some young gentlemen who appear here at mass, who well deserve to meet with some disgrace. Madame de Monaco is still indisposed: I do not see what her indisposition is like to end in. Monsieur the ‡ duke is here for one day: He is going to join the prince his father, who marches slowly with four or five thousand men. He has taken this time to see the king and the dutchess. Adieu, my dearest loveliest child. I embrace and kiss Mr. de Grignan. It is to him I send the opera.

I am going to answer your Letter of the last of July. Your correspondence, my dear, is excellent; our Letters are conversations; I speak to you, and you answer me: I admire your care and exactness; but I desire you not to make it a law to yourself; for if it causes the least inconvenience to you, or the least head-ach, believe me, whatever is ease to you, will to me be pleasure: For, without the least exaggeration, your interest, your pleasure, your health and relief from any pain or inquietude,

† Mr. de Turenne.

‡ Henry Jules, Prince of Condé.

holds the first rank amongst those things that are nearest to my heart.

You may believe me, the secret jealousy between Madam de Montespan and her friend still increases.

I shall begin with my health : my dear, I desire you not to give yourself any disturbance about it. I often see Mr. de Lorme at Mr. de Monmort's, whom he is raising from the dead. He approves the remedies I have used, and advises me to use no more, judging that I am perfectly out of danger of a fresh attack of the vapours I had the last year. The little remembrances I have had from them, have been only their last adieu on their taking leave of me : so small a disorder was suitable to the goodness of my constitution. He would have me take some powders before I part from hence : but it will be more out of complaisance for him, than any real occasion for them. If you had heard him give his opinion of me, you would have been freed from all pain on this account for the remainder of your life and mine. I hope you will repose yourself on his judgment ; and no longer count this inquietude for my health amongst the effects of your tenderness for me ; enough will remain besides.

As to the proposal of my going to Grignan instead of Brittany. I had already had it in my thoughts ; and whenever I would amuse myself with some agreeable imagination, the first thing that presents itself to me is this romantic adventure. The tour you would have me take is pleasant, and so far practicable, that I shall carry the idea of it with

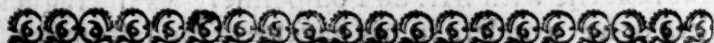
with me to Brittany and often entertain myself with it in my woods.

I advise you to write to the good Cardinal, on the great subject of the death of Mr. de Turenne; he will be touched with it. It was said the other day in very good company, that this age knew no great examples above the common race of men, besides the Cardinal de Retz and Mr. de Turenne; so that he is now left alone in this point of elevation. After this first Letter, take my advice, and write to him without the least constraint. If any little agreeable folly is at the tip of your pen, he will be charmed with it, as well as with the most serious thought; a religious ground may be innocently adorned with these little laces and embroideries; even his eminence himself sometimes condescends to sport an epigram with our grave abbè.

The Chevalier de Buons has left me his resident with Mr. de Pomponne. Guilleragues has done wonders in his gazette; the last part of his panegyric seems a little embarrassed; I should better like a stile more natural, though less accurate and elaborate.

The sermon you preached to me, on the evening before you parted from me, is still fresh in my memory; but as I cannot recall it to my thoughts, without introducing it by the imagination that I see you entering my chamber, and I have no longer the joy nor the hope of such a pleasing interview, it always costs me a tear; and whenever I repass in my fancy that whole evening, the remembrance of it is imbittered with a grief I am not yet able to support. All that we did those last days
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we were together, all the places we frequented, all the sorrows I concealed beneath a chearful countenance, for fear of renewing your exhortations; all this is still imprinted in my heart. I live over all this time again; in such a month we were at Livri; every season restores some past scene to my deluded thoughts. The amity I have for you is attended with a numerous train of uneasinesses; a continual absence joined with tenderness, ill consists with quiet and tranquility in a heart so void of philosophy as mine. But I must pass over these thoughts without dwelling too much on them. You see the state of mind I am in; and I perceive, my dear, that you smile at me. But my letter; what say you to it? I love to be always conversing with you, and since it does not displease you, and it gives me a pleasure, what harm can there be in it? Adieu once more, my dear; believe me truly and solely yours.



LETTER CCLVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 9 August, 1675.

AS my Billet of Wednesday last was so very short, I forgot a number of things that I had to say to you. Mr. Boucherat writes me word, that the Coadjutor did wonders at a conference held at St. Germain, on Monday night, upon the affair of the clergy in his diocese. The Bishops of Condom and of Agen told me the same, when

when I was at Versailles. I am persuaded he will acquit himself as well in his speech to the King: so that he will always merit our praise.

Our friends have repassed the Rhine very happily, after having beaten the enemy. This is very much to the honour of Mr. de Lorges: We all wish the king may send him a Marshal's staff, after an action so noble, so useful, and which he alone has the honour of. His horse was killed under him by a cannon-ball, which passed between his legs; he was mounted upon it. Providence had given its commission very happily for us to this innocent ball, and to all the rest of its brethren. We lost in this action the Marquis de Montbrun, and perhaps Mr. de Monlort, brother to the Prince d'Harcourt your cousin-german. The loss of the enemy was very great by their own confession. They had four thousand men killed. We lost but seven or eight hundred. The Duke de Sault, the Chevalier de Grignan, and the horse under their command, distinguished themselves. The English performed things almost incredible. In a word, we have been very fortunate.

They say, that Mr. de Montecuculli, after having sent a compliment to express his grief for the loss of so great a commander, let him know that he might repass the Rhine without any molestation from him; that he would not expose his reputation to the rage of an army enflamed with grief for the loss of their beloved general, and to the valour of young Frenchmen, which nothing could resist in their first impetuosity. In effect, the engagement was not general; and only the troops which attacked us were defeated.

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The Count de Lorges has the government of Alsace, and a pension of 25000 livres, which Vaubrun had. Alas ! this is not what he wanted.

Our good cardinal has written again to the pope, telling him, that he could not but hope, that when his holiness had seen the reasons in his letter, he would yield to his most humble prayers to receive the resignation of his hat : but we believe that the pope, who is infallible, and who does nothing in vain, will not so much as read his letter:

Let us talk a little of Mr. de Turenne ; it is a long time since we have said any thing of him. Do not you wonder that we think ourselves happy in having repassed the Rhine ; and what we should have been displeased with, if he had been living, seems a prosperity because we have him no longer : So great is the loss of one man.

Let me engage your attention to a thing that appears to me extremely noble : I also fancy myself to be reciting a passage in the Roman history. St. Hilaire, lieutenant general of the artillery, as you know, stopped Mr. de Turenne, who was galloping by, to shew him a battery : It was just as if he had said, Pray, sir, stop a little, it is here you are to be killed. A ball comes and takes off the arm of St. Hilaire, who was pointing to the battery, and kills Mr. de Turenne. The son of St. Hilaire throws himself upon his father, crying out and gushing into a flood of tears. Hold your peace, my son, said he : See Mr. de Turenne lies dead. This

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is what is to be wept eternally : This is what is irreparable. Thus this true patriot, without the least attention to himself, was wholly taken up in lamenting this great loss. The nobleness of this sentiment drew tears of admiration from Mr. de la Rochefoucault.

The gentleman of Mr. de Turenne, who is newly returned from the army, says he has seen heroical actions done by the chevalier de Grignan, who charged five times; and his cavalry forced the enemy to retreat in such a manner, that this uncommon vigour decided the fate of the battle. Mr. de Boufflers performed very well, as did likewise the duke de Sault; and above all, Mr. de Lorges, who shewed himself upon this occasion the nephew of a hero.

The duke de Villeroi is inconsolable upon the death of Mr. de Turenne. He writes, that it is not in the power of fortune to do him any further harm, after having deprived him of the pleasure of being loved and esteemed by such a man. He had just new cloathed a regiment of English at his own expence; and there were but nine hundred francs found in his coffer.

It comes into my head to tell you, contrary to my custom, a piece of the news of Europe. You know, my dear, that the king of Poland is dead. The grand marshal, the husband of mademoiselle d'Aarquen, is at the head of an army against the Turks. He has won a battle so entirely, that fifteen thousand Turks were left dead upon the field. This victory is so great, that it is not questioned but he will be named king; since he has the advantage

advantage to be at the head of an army; and, as Mr. de Turenne used to say, Fortune generally declares in favour of numerous battalions. I was pleased with this news, and I thought it would be no less pleasing to you.



LETTER CCLIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 12 August, 1675.

I SEND you one of the most entertaining and exact accounts that we have had since the death of Mr. Turenne. It is done by the young Marquis de Feuquieres*, who has a spice of the Arnauld in his head, that makes him write better than any of our courtiers besides.

I am just come from paying a visit to the Cardinal de Bouillon. He is so changed, you would hardly know him again: he asked much after you, and does not in the least doubt of your sentiments. He told me several things of Mr. de Turenne, that were very moving. This great man was certainly in a very fit condition to appear before God: for his life had been a continued scene of innocence and integrity. He asked the Cardinal, at Whitsuntide, Whether he might not communicate without a previous confession? His nephew answered him in the negative; be-

* Anthony de Pas, Marquis de Feuquieres, author of the *Memoires sur le Guerre*. He was grandson to Anne Arnauld, aunt to Mr. Arnauld d'Andilli.

cause he could not be assured of not having offended God since Easter: upon which M. de Turenne let him into the situation of his heart. He was a thousand leagues distant from the commission of any corporal sin. However he went to confession, in compliance with custom: "But, says he, must I open myself to this Recolet, as I was wont to do to Mr. de St. Gervais? Is it the same thing?" In truth, this was a soul worthy of Heaven: It was too nearly allied to God, and had preserved itself too incorruptly, not to return to him immediately. He was extremely fond of M. d'Elbeuf's son†, who is a little miracle of wit, at fourteen years of age. He sent him the last year to pay his respects to Mr. de Lorraine, who told him, "My little cousin, you are too happy in being able to see and hear M. de Turenne every day: you have no other father, no other friend and relation, but him: kiss his footsteps as he passes, and think it a happiness to die at his feet." This poor young creature is just dead with affliction; but an affliction of reason more than of childishness. It is feared it may prove fatal to him. The Count d'Auvergne has taken him with him; for he has nothing to expect from his father. Cavoye is afflicted in form. The Duke de Villeroy has wrote letters home, in the excess of his grief, expressed in such strong terms, as make it necessary to conceal them. He acknowledges no fortune, no favour, superior to that of having been beloved by this hero; and declares, that he now holds in contempt the esteem and favour of every mortal creature, let what will come on it. M. de Marsillac has exerted himself with respect to Mr. de Lorges, in declaring, that

† Henry de Lorraine, Duke d'Elbeuf, son to Charles of Lorraine and Elizabeth de la Tour de Bouillon, neice to Mr. de Turenne.

he

he merited a much greater reward than the spoils of Mr. de Vaubrun. It is certain, that there could not have been shewn a more encouraging and edifying example, than to have sen him a Marshal's staff, in return for his great successes.

The Chevalier de Lorraine is retired to an abbey he has in Picardy: Mad. de Monaco was to see him at Chilli; but could not persuade him from going. He is thought to be a little out in his politics: and 'tis imagined that he will find himself caught. It is somewhat extraordinary to desire a general officer to be turned off, whose conduct has given satisfaction; and yet he sets his return at no less a price. I don't know, but that he might have been indulged in this some years ago; but the times are very different now. La Garde will have told you what M. de Louvois said to Mad. Langlée; and how well pleased his Majesty is with the glorious behaviour of the Chevalier de Grignan. If there is any happiness for a man in this life, he must certainly enjoy it; in the glory he has acquired by his behaviour, not a relation, nor even an indifferent person, mention him without the greatest praise: had it not been for his corselet, he had been a dead man. He received a number of blows upon that blessed corselet: he never wore one in his life before. Providence! Providence!

When the news came of the death of Mr. de Turenne, a servant of the Abp. of Rheims awakened him, about five in the morning, to acquaint him with it: he asked if the army was defeated? they told him no: upon which he reproved his valet de chambre for wakening him, called him *rascal*, drew his curtains again, and resumed his nap.

Farewell!

Farewel ! child. What can I say, you know, after this ?



L E T T E R CCLX.

To the Same.

*Versailles, Wednesday 13 August,
at midnight, 1675.*

I SEND you the news of the day. The King said this evening, that the Duke of Zell having besieged Tréves, and the Marshal de Crequi being upon the march towards him, the Duke had raised the siege, set fire to his own camp, passed the river on three bridges, charged the Marshal in flank and routed him, and taken all his cannon and baggage : That the foot are cut to pieces, and the horse are in a deplorable condition ; and, that it was not known what had become of the Marquis de Crequi. - It is imagined that the enemy is again returned before Tréves, which is now without a Governor ; for Mr. de Vigueri, going to visit a battery, was thrown by his horse into the ditch, and killed on the spot * : poor La Marck and the Chevalier de Cauviffon are killed. To-morrow we shall know the rest. All this came from the

* It was said, that M. de Vigueri, the Governor of Tréves, had received orders to make a sally from the town with the greater part of his garrison, and to join the Marshal de Crequi during the heat of the fight ; but that not having had the precaution to communicate this to the officer next in command under him in the town, his sudden death entirely frustrated all the Marshal's measures.

King's own mouth ; so that I think there is no room to doubt of its having been a compleat defeat.

Wednesday 14 August.

I HAVE been running about all this morning, to pick up some news about La Troupe and de Sanzen. There is not a word about the latter. Some say, that La Troupe is wounded; and others again, that it is not known where he is : but it appears pretty certain that he is not dead, because we know the names of so many of inferior rank that fell. The consternation is very great. There is nothing now to hinder this victorious army from joining Montecuculli, who has passed the Rhine at Strasbourg* ; which city has received the German troops, notwithstanding its neutrality. It is imagined, that the bad state of the prince's health will not permit him to head our army. What an unlucky circumstance for his reputation ! Duras has at present the sole command : when he wrote to the King, to return him thanks for his promotion, he begged leave to observe to his Majesty, that he was much less deserving of the honour of being Marshal of France, than his brother M. de Lorges. The enemy are very close upon the death of M. de Turenne. See the effects of such an accident. They found their courage restored. Mad. de Méri is in great pain about her brother : it would be something very extraordinary if La Trousse should have saved his life, in the situation he was in. We have no positive list of the killed yet : but the number is

* This town was then governed in the nature of a republic, and did not become subject to the dominion of France till after the 30th of September, 1681.

certainly

certainly great, by those we already hear of. The condition of poor Mad. de Crequi is already dreadful; and so is that of Madam de la Trouffe: for they neither of them know what is become of their husbands.



L E T T E R CCLXI.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 16 August, 1675.

I WOULD fain have all that you write to me of Mr. de Turenne inserted in a funeral oration. There is an uncommon beauty and energy in your stile; you had then all the force of eloquence that can be inspired by grief. Think not that his memory can be lost here, since your Letter is arrived. That torrent that carries every thing along with it, cannot remove a memory so well established: It is consecrated to immortality; and that even in the hearts of a great number, whose sentiments on this subject can never be effaced. I was the other day at Mr. de la Rochefoucault's; Mr. le Premier came thither, Madame de Lavaradin, Mr. de Marillac, and Madame de la Fayette. The conversation, which lasted two hours, turned wholly on the divine qualities of this true hero; the eyes of every one were bathed in tears; and you cannot believe how deep the grief of the loss of him is engraven on all their hearts. You have exceeded us in nothing, but in the satisfaction of sighing aloud, and of writing his panegyric. We re-

marked one thing, which was, that he had not only been admired at his death. The largeness of his heart, the vast extent of his knowledge, the elevation of his mind; all this the world was full of during his life: How much higher the admiration of it was made to rise by his death you may easily imagine. In a word, my dear, do not think that the death of this great man is regarded here like that of others. As for his soul, it is a miracle, which can proceed from nothing but the perfect esteem every one had for him, that none of the devotees have yet taken it into their heads to doubt whether it be in a good state; it is not possible to comprehend that sin or guilt could find a place in his heart; his † conversion, so sincere, appeared to us like a baptism. Every one speaks of the innocence of his manners, the purity of his intentions, his humility free from all manner of affectation, the sentiments of solid glory his heart was filled with, without haughtiness or ostentation, loving virtue for its own sake, without regarding the approbation of men, and, to crown all, a generous and christian charity. Did not I tell you of the regiment that he cloathed? It cost him fourteen thousand francs; and left him almost without money. The English told Mr. de Lorges, that they would continue to serve this campaign to revenge his death; but that after this they would retire, not being able to serve under any other general after Mr. de Turenne. When some of the new troops grew a little impatient in the morasses, where they were almost up to the knees in water, the old soldiers animated them in this manner: What is it you complain of? It is plain you do not yet know Mr. de

† He was originally a Protestant.

Turenne: He is more grieved than we ourselves are, when we are under any difficulty; he is thinking of nothing this moment but of removing us from hence; he wakes, while we sleep; he is a father to us; it is easy to see that you are but young soldiers: Thus they encouraged them. I return to the state of his soul. It is really a remarkable thing that no zealot has yet thought fit to make a doubt, whether it has pleased God to receive with open arms one of the best and noblest souls he has created: Reflect a little upon this general assurance of his salvation, and you will find it is a kind of a miracle scarcely ever known but in his case. In a word, none has yet presumed to doubt of his everlasting rest.

You will see in the news the effects of this loss. Mr. de † Rohan, with a handful of men, has dispersed and put to flight the mutineers, who were formed into troops in the dutchy of Rohan. The troops are at Nantes, commanded by Fourbin; for Vins is still a subaltern. The orders given to Fourbin are to obey Mr. de Chaulnes: but as Mr. de Chaulnes is in Fort-Lewis, Fourbin in effect has the command. You understand very well what these imaginary honours are, which remain without action in those who have such a titular

† An adventure of a different kind, mentioned in Letter XXXVII. having been falsely attributed to Madame de Rohan, who is there misrepresented, as creating a jealousy between a pair of lovers at a bal, it is a piece of justice due to Mr. de Rohan to take this opportunity of restoring him to the credit of it. An error of the press in the original French, not having been observed, caused the sense of that passage to be perverted in the translation. The true meaning of it is, that the lady there mentioned, not observing that her lover stood behind her, indiscreetly run the hazard of losing him, by admitting too freely the gallantries of Mr. de Rohan.

command. Mr. de Lavardin desired this command: He has been at the head of an old regiment, and pretended it was an honour due to him; but his pretension was not admitted. It is said, that our mutineers demanded a pardon: I suppose they will obtain it, after a decent number of them have been hanged. Mr. de Chamillart, who was odious to the province, is removed; and Mr. de Marillac, who is a man of great honour, is made intendant. Those disorders no longer hinder me from taking my journey, but there is something here I am unwilling to leave: I have not yet been able to go to Livre, whatever inclination I have to it. The time must be taken as it comes: I am willing to be here, as it were in the very center of news, in a time when things are in such a terrible confusion.

Let me add a word more concerning Mr. de Turenne. He had made an acquaintance with a shepherd, who knew perfectly well the roads and the country; he used to take him alone with him, and order his troops to be posted according to his direction. He had a great affection for this shepherd, and esteemed him as a man of good plain sense. He said that Colonel Bec owed his rise to such an accident; and that he believed this shepherd would make his fortune as he had done.

He was very well pleased with having contrived to make his troops pass without danger; and said to Mr. de Roucy, in good earnest this seems to me no ill performance, and I believe Mr. de Montecuculli will not find any thing amiss in it: It is indeed esteemed a master-piece of military skill.

What

What say you of the sad events that happen to us? Does it not seem that the courage and conduct of Mr. de Turenne are gone over to our enemies; and that they find nothing impossible after the defeat of the Marshal de Crequi?

Mr. de la Feuillade took post, and came directly to Versailles, where he surprised the king, and said to him, Sir, some (meaning Rochefort) send for their wives, and some come to see them: As for me, I am come only to pay a short visit to your majesty, and to thank you a thousand and a thousand times. I shall see none besides your majesty, for it is to you I owe every thing. He talked a pretty while with the king, and then taking his leave, said, Sir, I am just going; I beg you to make my compliments to the queen and the dauphin, and to my wife and children. After this he immediately took horse; and in effect, saw no person living besides. This little sally pleased the king much; he told the court, laughing, how he had been charged with compliments. It is a great advantage to be happy, every thing succeeds, and is well taken.



L E T T E R CCLXII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday evening 16 August, 1675.

A T length my dear Mr. de la Troupe is found. I cannot but admire his good fortune in this affair : after having performed wonders at the head of his battalion, he was surrounded by two squadrons of the enemy's horse, and so completely surrounded, that no one knew what it would end in ; when on a sudden he finds himself prisoner to — Whom? The Marquis de Grana, whom he was acquainted with for six months at Cologne, and with whom he had cultivated a strict friendship. You may judge how he will be heated : he has got a pretty little wound, which will furnish him with an excellent plea for passing the vintage at la Trousse : for there is no room to doubt that he will be released on his parole ; and what is still better, will meet with the most favourable reception at court. Nothing can exceed the congratulations and compliments that have been made him by all his friends, on this occasion. I really pity him for having so many thanks to return : but is it not certain, that if he was to have cut out his own fortune he would not have had it more completely to his wish? As for honest Sanzei we have no news of him, which does not look well. The Marshall de Crequi is at Trèves, at least it is reported so, and that his people

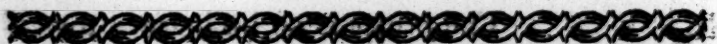
ple saw him pass the river, with three others, in a sorry little boat. His wife is in the utmost distress, not having heard a syllable from himself: For my part I really think he has been drowned, or else killed by the country people in his way to Trèves: In short, I think matters go very badly on all sides, La Trouffe excepted.

The prince is on his journey towards Germany. The duke is already there. M. de la Feuillade is gone to reassemble the scattered remains of the Marshal's army, in order to join the prince. We should not make almanacks: but if the enemy should have taken Haguenau, as is reported, the map will inform us that is not so well. If you complain for want of news now, you are really very hard to be pleased: It is my belief that you will not be in want of extraordinary events for some time. We are told here that the troops at Messina are reembarked very quietly, and returning back to Provence.

The Coadjutor had composed his oration in the customary style of a panegyric; but now it would be rather unseasonable; so he has passed over the present situation of things with admirable skill and address: He will inform you of the turn he has given to our late unhappy affair; and provided this additional piece be well grafted in, it will make one of the finest and most elegant parts in his speech.

What says the Count to all this news? It is him I am to congratulate on the glorious behaviour of the Chevalier St. Herem, who lost two nephews in a week. The eldest had the

command of the regiment of cavalry. I had some thoughts of asking it for your brother, but Mad. de Montrevel has applied for it; and with as much earnestness as she did for a husband: there was no such thing as refusing her. They say La Marek is not dead: I am sorry for his wife, and perhaps for his mistress.



L E T T E R CCLXIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 19 August, 1675.

I Begin this Letter, but shall not finish it my dear till I have told you a number of different things. I am thinking which I shall chuse first.

I will relate to you some such excellent things which have been said by the king, that it will be a pleasure to you to learn. He was fully sensible of the loss he had sustained in Mr. de Turenne: he was for some time very thoughtful, and upon reflection could not but attribute our last misfortune† to the being deprived of that experienced general. One of the courtiers, willing to make his majesty easy, said with an affected unconcern that our loss had been but very trifling: his majesty made answer that he hated such disguises, for the defeat was the most compleat that could be.

† See the Letter of the 13 August.

He told those who seemed inclinable to excuse the marshal de Crequi†, that he acknowledged him for a very brave man, but what vexes me, added his majesty, is, that my troops have been so shamefully beaten by a parcel of fellows who know nothing but how to play at basset : It is certain that the duke of Zeue is young and a great player : but this was nevertheless a pretty good trial of skill. Another courtier asking, with a pert air, what business the marshal had to give battle ? The king reproved him, by repeating a story which he remembered of the duke of Weimar, and which was extremely applicable to the occasion. This duke of Weimar happening to be in France, one Parabere an old fellow, and one of the knights of the Cordon-bleu, said to him in talking about the last battle which he had lost, But why did you give battle, Sir ? because Sir, said the duke, I thought to have gained it ; and turning about upon his heel, asked the standers by, Who is that blue-ribband fellow ? The courtiers made themselves very merry with the application of this story.

I have sent all your Letters. I shall speak to M. de Pomponne about the *Monseigneur*. In the mean time I fancy M. de Vivonne has his passport without any further consequences ; and as it is certain that you ought not on any account to disoblige him, I shall write him a little billet in your name, and slip in a *Monseigneur* in honour of his family : as to the others we will dispute it with them a little, such as Beuvron and Lavardin, who make their wives, aunts, and mothers write to them in that stile. I know this to be fact, and

† One of the greatest generals of the last century.

that they are for hindering the decision †. It is imagined that d'Ambre will lose it with marshal de Albret, and that the judgment passed in that case will be made general. However, it will soon be decided, for the thing is to pass judgment in a very few days.

Monday Night.

I HAVE had an hours talk with M. de Pomponne and Mad. de Vins : and after having gone over several subjects, amongst which Provence had its share. I mentioned the *Monseigneur*, “ Ah for God’s sake madam, *said M. de Pomponne* “ to me, let M. de Grignan keep clear of *Monsieur* “ or he will make his court very badly. The king “ has explained himself on this head, in the affair “ of the Marquis d’Ambre. Marshal Gramont “ says, after his way, that the Count de Guiche was “ no-mean fellow, void of birth or dignity, and yet “ he never scrupled giving the title of *Monseigneur* “ to a marshal of France; therefore, I beg that “ Mr. de Grignan will take my advice, and by all “ means drop *Monsieur*.” These were his very “ words, I write them just as they came from his lips, so I would not have you scruple it with M. de Vionne; you may avoid writing to the others, but if you do write to them, you must not hesitate. It is now four days since the king has explained himself concerning it, and the partisans of the Marshal de Gramont support it with all their might. Mad. de Veris desired me to give you the fullest assurances of her particular esteem. Mesdames de Villars and

† There was a dispute at that time, whether a marshal of France had a right to be stiled *Monseigneur* (my Lord) in writing to him.

de St. Geran came in a little after we had done talking: the latter has spoken to the king, and asked the government which was the late Vaubrun's for her husband. She trembled so very much at first that she could scarcely utter a word; but when she had recovered herself, no one could talk better, but after all I am afraid she will not succeed.

Nothing could be more elegant and better delivered than the Coadjutor's speech: he passed over that part of it which had been added upon the occasion, with a grace and dexterity that surprised every one; the courtiers were particularly struck with it; a variation of phrase is something so new, that he gladly embraced the opportunity that Voiture wishes for in his letters to the prince: that he may seem less tiresome by repetition; and made as good an use of it as Voltaire could possibly have done. The king commended his action greatly, and said to the dauphin, "What would you give now to speak as well as the Coadjutor has done." "May it please your majesty, replied M. Montausier, we are not come this length yet: it is sufficient if we know how to answer."

Mr. de la Trousse has written to his wife: he is prisoner to his good friend the Marquis de Grana, with whom he is treated with the last degree of politeness. He is perfectly recovered from his wound, and in sound health: never sure was man so lucky! it looks as if the whole action was brought about purely to heighten his glory. He writes word that M. de Sanzei is certainly killed, and I think it can be no otherwise; for, besides that there is not the least account of him: he was the very kind of man that was the most likely to sacrifice.

face his own person when he saw his regiment behave ill. However, we shall soon have something more certain.

I am not determined yet about my departure; it depends upon a conference that is to be held at Monsieur de l'Hommeau's, where we shall reason upon the state of affairs. The hero's body is not to be carried to Turenne as it was told me at first, but to St. Denis, where it is to be laid at the foot of the burying-place of the Bourbons. There is a chapel intended to be erected for the bodies which are to be taken out of the hole in which they now are, and Mr. Turenne will be the first laid there. There are already four great captains lying at their master's feet; but were there not, methinks he has a right to be first. In all the places through which this illustrious corpse passes, there is nothing to be heard but cries and lamentations, people crouding to touch the bier, and processions to meet or follow it without number, so that those who have the charge of it are obliged to march by night. If it comes thro' Paris it will occasion universal grief.

I have been just told from very good authority, that the courtiers, thinking to make their court to perfection, told the king that whole squadrons, and even battalions, at a time, were every moment coming into Thienville and Metz, and that our loss had in fact been little or nothing. His majesty, like a man of honour, was disgusted with such bare-faced flattery, and hearing them talk of the arrival of such a number of troops, *Why,* says he, *here are more troops than I had at first.* The Marshal de Gramont, who has a readier turn of wit than any of
the

the rest, answered, *May it please your majesty they have had young ones.* Now these are the sort of trifles that I take a pleasure in hearing and repeating when they are really true.

A courier is arrived who has seen Marshal de Crequi at Trèves. We are still in great pain for Sanzei; we hear nothing but what is disagreeable about him: some say he is prisoner, others that he was killed; and others again that he is in Trèves with the Marshal. But there is no trusting to this. The enemies keep Trèves blocked up. The king told M. le Premier that he was glad to find that his son was safe; M. le Premier replied, *I assure your majesty I had rather he had been taken prisoner: I am not much pleased with such a safety.* The king assured him he had done his duty. They begin to talk again of the journey to Fontainebleau. I have not yet forgiven that charming place * which separated us; I cannot think of that moment without the greatest emotion and grief: I must absolutely go thither to meet you again or I shall never be reconciled to it.

The Cardinal de Bouillon is just arrived here, he is greatly affected with your Letters, and fully persuaded of your sentiments; he is almost always in tears. I propose to shew him a Letter from the Chevalier de Grignan, that there is no reading with dry eyes. I have had very little company to day. I find myself very well after the physic I have taken. I was nursed by all my friends, your picture served to enliven the conversation, it is every day more and more a master-piece. I fancy it is, because Mignard has left off painting. Adieu

* See Letter dated the 19th of August.

my dearest and ever lovely, if you should find a thousand faults in this letter, let me desire you to excuse them, for there is no such thing as reading it over again.



LETTER CCLXIV.

To the Same.

Livré, Wednesday 21 August, 1675.

IN truth, my dear, you ought to be here with me. I came hither this morning all alone, extremely fatigued, and weary of Paris to such a degree that I could no longer bear to stay there. Our Abbé stays behind on account of some affairs: for my part I have none till Saturday; I shall be here these three days in peace and repose. I shall walk much; I believe my health requires it. I shall think extremely of you, not to say continually. There is no wood, no green, which does not bring to my remembrance that we were there together the last year. Alas! how sad a difference! It is sweet to me to think of you, but your absence mingles a bitterness with my thoughts, at which my heart sickens. I foresee this will be a gloomy evening with me. I am most pleased to entertain you in the little cabinet you so much frequented; there nothing will interrupt me.

I left Mr. de Coulanges much in pain for Mr. Sanzei. As for Mr. de la Trousse, next to my dear heroes in romance, I have not seen any thing so perfectly happy. Have you never seen
a prince

a prince, engaged in a battle, so as to be in the extremity of danger. A hero of the other side advances to see who it is that makes so great a resistance. He sees the inequality of the combat; he is ashamed of it; he calls off his men; he asks pardon of that valiant man, who is induced by his generous behaviour to offer up his sword to him, for were it not for him he would never have yielded; he makes him prisoner. He discovers him to have been one of his Friends, when they both lived together in the court of Augustus: He treats him as his own brother; he commends his extraordinary valour. But I fancy the prisoner is observed to sigh; he is perhaps in love. I believe he may be permitted to return upon his parole: But I do not see where the princess is, who expects him; this only circumstance is wanting to compleat the history.

Whenever I send you news, depend upon it that I have it from persons who are well informed, but they will not be cited for the least trifles. There are very knowing people, from whom I never take any news. Have you a mind to know what the Valets de Chambre have writ on this † occasion? You may easily imagine this comes from that place where they love ridiculous letters. One makes an inventory of what he has lost, as his trunk, his coat, or his hat, or perhaps his bottle. It was, says he, a confounded disorder: if I had been general, it had never happened. Another says, we were a company of pleasant mad-men; we were but seven thousand, and we attacked twenty-six thousand; so you may see how finely we have

† That is after the unfortunate affair of the Marshal de Crequi at Trèves.

been

been drubbed. A third tells how nimbly they made their escape, and owns the terrible fright they were all in. You see there is great ingenuity in these accounts. You may think, my dear, I must have a great deal of leisure to write to you all these fooleries.

You speak so worthily of the Cardinal de Retz, and of his retreat, that this only might suffice to make you deserve his amity, and his esteem. I meet with some people, who say, he ought to come to Saint Denis; but they would be the first to blame him, if he should take their advice. Many are desirous, at any rate, to furnish the beauty of his action; but I defy the most piercing jealousy to find the least blemish in it.

What you say of Mr. de Turenne deserves a place in this panegyric. The Cardinal de Bouillon will have the pleasure, or rather the pain of it; for I am well assured it will make him weep. Since the death of this hero of the war, the hero of the breviary is retired to Commercy; there was no longer any safety for him at Saint Michael. The first president of the Cour des Aides has an estate in Champagne: His tenant came to him the other day to demand either to have his rent considerably abated, or to be released from his bargain. They told him it was not customary; and asked him, upon what account? He replied, that, in the time of Mr. de Turenne, the people might gather in their harvests in safety, and count upon the revenue of their lands in that country; but that, since his death, all the world was quitting it, as fearing the enemy would soon enter upon it. These things, which are simple and natural, furnish an encomium

mium on that great man no less magnificent, than the studied harangues of the Flechiers and the Mascarens. What you say of Mr. de Serges is of the same nature.

Do not press me so to come and see you; you turn away my thoughts too much from the melancholy obligations I am under. If I listened to the suggestions of my heart, I should lay aside all my little affairs, and come away to Grignan. Oh! with what joy should I fix myself there; and for the three or four days I have to live, model my life after my own fancy, and follow my own inclination. What a folly is it to constrain ourselves for the formalities of devoirs and affairs! alas! who is there that will thank us for it! I am but too much in this way of thinking. The rules of life, to my great regret, are only found in my actions: as for my words, they have already taken wing; and I have withdrawn myself at least from the constraint of approving what I still continue to do.

The friends of the lady-traveller, perceiving that the inside of the cards begin to be seen, affect to laugh, and turn it into matter of ridicule; or at least agree that there has been something in it, but that all is reconciled. I will not answer for the present, or the future, in such an uncertain country; but I can assure you of the past; and there was never any thing so sharp as the resentment that appeared at the time these little favourites were so much mortified. As for the sovereignty, it is as firmly re-established as ever it has been, since the days of Pharamond. Madam de Montepan plays at cards in her night gown with the lady of the castle, who thinks herself too happy in being

ing received, and well understands it is her part to retire upon the least intimation given to the lady of the bed-chamber.

My life is at present regulated by your affairs; this is the only consolation I have. I shall retire to Bretagne, during the vacations, and return in the month of November, with a full design to abandon myself to all the chichane prepared for me by the infidelity of Mr. de Mirepoix.

‡ *Depit mortel, juste courreux.
Je m'abandonne à vous.*

I am by no means satisfied with la Dupuis-Defou; if she loved Mr. de Grignan, she would have concluded every thing. We have seen clearly, that what she did the other day was only the effect of the rage she had conceived against Mirepoix, who had oppressed her with twenty papers to be signed: When she is left to her natural temper, she is incapable of any firm resolution. The ruin of this family makes a great noise. I said to her yesterday, in short, madame, it is purely out of the respect we have had for you, that we are thus embarrassed with affairs of your brother: If we had done three years ago, what we have done now, Mr. de Mirepoix could not have made a pretext of this defeat to refuse our ratification. We cannot so much as get from her any answer to this: She goes to the door, to see if any one listens, and when she has satisfied herself there is nobody, she says not one word. It is a misery to see the dissipations of this house, from the greatest matters to the

‡ Implacable and just resentment, I give myself up to you.

least

least. Senseless people! Senseless management!
This is all the conclusion that can be drawn from it.

Fear nothing from our war of Bretagne; there is no farther danger: You may safely trust to my cowardice; I believe I shall venture thither under the protection of the great d'Harouy. My health is perfectly recovered: My good friend de Lorme has told me that I may keep his powder for the winter, and take for three days a ptisanne, which he thinks a remedy proper for this season; he is of opinion that I have entirely got over this indisposition.

My son is in despair about the affair of his † Guidonage: Do you remember the prudent maxims you laid down to him, by the authority of Don Quixote. He is at present at nine hundred leagues distance from the cape he might have arrived at by your repeated directions. Every thing that is vacant, is demanded for brothers who have been wounded, or for families that have suffered so much in the service, that one is ashamed to employ any vain endeavours to bar up their way to preferment. We must leave it to providence to determine the fortune of this poor Guidon: I encourage him as much as I can.

I will let you know my address, if I go from hence: Alas! you may safely leave this care to me; it is the chief support of my life. Adieu for this day: I have tired you sufficiently. The bell rings to Complins: You are not unacquainted with my œconomy. It is very fine wea-

†The office of a standard-bearer.

ther;

ther; I shall walk abroad, and think of you with an extreme tenderness.



LETTER CCLXV.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 26 August, 1675.

I Returned on Saturday from Livri, and went after dinner to Mad. de Lavardin's, who has wrote you a few lines, with an account of what has passed. The court is set out for Fontainebleau; the remembrance of that place makes me shudder, † and yet other people go thither to divert themselves. God grant we do not meet with some fatal blow in the mean time. The siege of Tréves is carried on very briskly. If any ball has a commission to kill the Marshal de Crequi it will have no great trouble to find him, for he exposes himself like a mad man. The prince is with the army in Germany. He said to a person who was with him not long since; "I wish I could converse with the shade of M. de Turenne for two hours only, that I might be let into his chain of operations and designs, and make myself as well acquainted with the country, and Montecuculli's manner of acting, as he was." And when the same person told him that he thought his highness looked very well, and prayed God that he might return safe for his own sake as well as that of France,

† See Letter of the 19 August.

the prince made him no answer, but only shrugged up his shoulders.

My son writes me word that the Prince of Orange makes as if he would besiege Que-
noi; if so, they are at the eve of an action. M.
de Luxembourg wants greatly to do something to
be talked of; he is very happy, for he has had an
effectual conversation with the Prince's shade. In
short we are under apprehensions on all sides. I
have asked M. de Louvois for Sanzei's regiment full
and wholly, with leave to dispose of the Guidonage,
supposing all the while that poor Sanzei is really
dead; though we have no news about him yet.
The Viscount de Marville is my resident with the
minister, and is to bring me his answer. As for the
regiment of Picardy, we must drop all thoughts
of it; unless we have a mind to be overwhelmed
with debt in two years time; but it is wrong to say
overwhelmed, it is being *disgraced*; for since it is no
longer permitted to ruin one's self, nor to borrow,
as formerly, there is nothing left for it but down-
right infamy.

Every day more and more convinces
us that nothing could be more compleat, nor atten-
ded with greater confusion, than the defeat suffered
by the Marshal de Crequi. I saw his lady last Sa-
turday at M. de Pomponne's. She is hardly to be
known again. The same day I dined with the
Coadjutor and the handsome Abbé. I am always
overjoyed when I can meet with any of the Grig-
nan's. I can easily concieve how much of your
time is taken up with reading my Letters; they
take you from every other kind of business. You
say that you are frequently about, and lose your
memory.

memory. My dear, I have the same thing told me twice a week. My abominable long Letters are enough to do it, if it was nothing else. They make a huge volume, that it must be utterly impossible for you to read them for any continuance, and yet you say you love them. Here is the big Abbé, who is telling me a thousand ridiculous things upon my journey into Brittany. He will have it that I have fixed my resolution to go only since I heard of the disorders occasioned by the mutineers there, and that I want sadly to be present, because it is a thing I may not have an opportunity of seeing again as long as I live. You pleased me extremely in shuddering at St. Hilaire's speech †; he is not dead, but will live with his left arm to a rising and unequalled beauty and fortitude of soul. I fancy this defeat of ours must have appeared somewhat extraordinary to you, as the like never happened since you have been born.

The Chevalier de Lorraine is returned about Monsieur again, as if nothing had happened: He has met with some charitable person, who has put him into the right or wrong way at last. This is a little piece of news that does not merit much attention: It is but the paquet of a day, in comparison with the death of M. de T. and the consequences that have followed upon it.

Our Cardinal is still at St. Michael's. I am going to write to him; he indulges me in that pleasure. The Abbé de Pontcarré is very deserving of your Letters; he is fond of them, and reads them as they ought to be read: He shews them to

† See the Letter of 9 August.

me and then hides them as he would old gold. You cannot conceive what an agreeable turn you give without thinking of it, to every thing that you take in hand.

MADAMOISELLE is here to bathe herself, she does not go to Fontainebleau. I most sincerely embrace M. de Grignan and his little ones; but I am your's, my dear, above every other consideration: You know how far I am from that piece of doatage which transfers the maternal love to the grand-children: Mine remains fixed in its first stage, and I love the little folks, because I love you.



LETTER CCLXVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 28 August, 1675.

MY dear child, I am going to entertain you once more about M. de Turenne, Mad. d'Elbeuf †, who is for a few days at the Cardinal de Bouillon's, invited me to dine with them yesterday, and to share in their grief. Mad. de la Fayette was there likewise; we fully answered the purpose of our meeting, for there was not a dry eye amongst us all. Mad. d'Elbeuf had a picture of the hero divinely well executed. All his people arrived about eleven o'clock, the poor crea-

† Sister to the Cardinal de Bouillon.

tures were already in deep mourning, and bathed in tears every one of them : I hear a Gentleman came in who was ready to die at the sight of the picture, and could not utter a word for sighing and sobbing ; his valets chambre, his footmen, his pages, his trumpets, appeared melted in tears, and made every one else weep to see them. The first who was in a condition to speak, made us answers to the mournful questions we put to him ; we prevailed on him to relate the manner of his death. It seems he was desirous of confessing, and when he retired to rest he gave his orders for the evening, and was to have communicated the next day which was Sunday, when he expected to give battle. He got on horseback at two o'clock the Saturday, after having taken a little refreshment, and as he had a good many people with him he left them all at about thirty paces distant from the hill and said to young d'Elbeuf, " Nephew, do you stay there, you only keep about me and make me be taken notice of." M. Hamilton, who happened to be near the place whether he was going, said to him, " Sir, come this way if you please, the enemy will be sure to fire where they see you." " You are quite in the right Sir, replied *M. de Turenne*, I would not willingly be killed to day ; this will do extremely well." He had scarce turned his horse when he saw St. Hilaire, who coming up to him with his hat in his hand, desired him to cast his eye on a battery he had just raised, pointing to the place. *M. de Turenne* turns back, and in that very instant, without so much as having time to stop his horse, he had his arm and part of his body torn to pieces by the same ball that carried off St. Hilaire's arm and hand in which he held his hat. The Gentleman who was watching him very attentively did

did not see him fall, for his horse ran away with him as far as the place where he had left young d'Elbeuf; he was leaning with his face over the pommel of the saddle. The moment his horse stopt, this great man fell off his back into the arms of his people who were gathered round him, just opened his eyes, moved his lips a little, and sank to eternal rest. Think of his peoples seeing him in this condition, dead, and a part of his heart carried away; they immediately burst forth into loud cries and lamentations, but M. Hamilton quieted them as well as he could, and had young d'Elbeuf removed who had thrown himself upon his uncle's body frantic with grief, and would not be dragged from it without violence. A cloak was immediately thrown over the body, and it was carried aside into a hedge, where they kept watch over it in silence till a carriage could be sent for to carry it to his tent: there it was met by M. de Lorges, M. de Roye, and several others who were ready to expire with grief; but they were obliged to constrain themselves, and think of the important business they had on their hands. He had a military service performed for him in the camp, where tears and unaffected sorrow made the truest mourning. However the officers had each a crape scarf, the drums were all covered with the same, they beat only a single stroke, the soldiers marched with their pikes trailing and pieces reversed; but one cannot represent to ones self the cries and lamentations of the whole army without being greatly moved with it. His nephew assisted at this mournful ceremony, in what condition I leave you to judge. M. de Roye, though much wounded, had himself carried thither. I suppose the poor Chevalier de Grignan was overwhelmed with grief. When the body was removed

from the camp in order to be brought to Paris, there is no expressing the distress and outcries of the soldiers and of every place through which it passed : but at Languedoc they exceeded every thing of the kind : the bier was met by all the principle inhabitants in mourning habits to the number of one hundred, followed by the common people, especially the clergy, in procession. In the town they had a solemn service performed, and, with one accord, taxed themselves towards defraying the expences, which amounted to five thousand francs ; for they had conducted the body to the next town and defrayed the expences of those who attended it. What say you to these natural marks of affection founded on the most extraordinary merit ? He is to be brought into St. Denis this evening, the people are all gone to meet the body at a place about two leagues distance, from whence they will conduct it to a chapel where it is to be deposited for the present ; there will be a service performed at St. Denis, till that at Notre Dame is celebrated, which will be a solemn one. Such was the diversion we had at the Cardinal's, we dined in the manner which you will guess, and afterwards did nothing but sigh till four o'clock. The Cardinal de Bouillon mentioned you, and took upon him to answer for you, that had you been in Paris you would have made one in our melancholy party : I assured him that you took no small share in his grief. He intends to answer both your letter and M. de Grignan's, and make you both his best wishes, as does likewise the worthy d'Elbeuf, who as well as her son has lost every thing. It was a fine notion of mine to undertake this detail of things, which you know already as well as myself, but these originals struck
me,

me, as I was to let you see in what manner we, in this part of the world, forget M. de Turenne.

M. de la Garde told me the other day, that while every tongue was so lavish in the praise of the Chevalier de Grignan and the wonders he had performed, he had advised his brothers * to bestir themselves on the occasion, to support his interest at least for this year; and that he found them both very well disposed to exert themselves to the utmost of their power. This good creature is at Fontainebleau, from whence he is to return in three days to set out for good; for he longs to be gone, though the courtiers in general seem to be very leaden heeled. Really the condition of poor Mad. de Sanzei is deplorable, we know nothing yet about her husband; he is neither dead nor alive, wounded nor prisoner. His people do not take the least notice about him in their Letters. M. de la Twusre, after having mentioned the report of his being killed, this was the day of the action, has never since mentioned a syllable about him, neither to poor Mad. de Sanzei nor to Coulanges, † so that we are quite at a loss what to write to that poor distracted woman; and yet it is cruel to have her in this uncertain condition: For my part I am persuaded that her husband is killed; the dirt and blood upon his face have disfigured him so as not to be known again, and he has been stript with the rest of the slain. Or very likely he was killed at a considerable distant from any of the rest, or by the country people on the road, and so thrown into

* The Coadjutor of Arles, and the Abbe de Grignan

† Madam de Sévigné was sister to Mr. de Coulanges, and Mr. de la Trouffe was cousin German to both.

some hedge. I think it is more probable that he has met with some such a melancholy fate, than that he has been taken prisoner without any one hearing a word about him.

But now, my dear, I must tell you that it is at the instance of the Abbé that I determine upon this journey, he looks upon it as so absolutely necessary, that I cannot contradict him, or oppose his will; I shall not have him always with me, and therefore I ought to take the proper advantages of his good intentions towards me. It will be no more than a trip, for the good Abbé is not the least disposed to pass a winter there. He expresses himself very sincerely on that head. I am you know always the dupe to every thing that has the mark of sincerity: So much the worse for them that deceive me.

Have you my friend Corbinelli and M. de Vardes with you? I hope so. In that case I dare say there has been a sufficient reasoning upon events amongst you; but if after all you cannot help thinking of the death of M. de Turenne, and are at a loss to suppose what will be the consequences of it: you do neither more nor less than we do here, who are not at so great a distance from the scene of action as Provence. M. de Barillon supped here last night. The conversation turned upon M. de Turenne, and the universal grief occasioned by his loss: when he related at large to us his steady virtue, his love of truth; how much he prized virtue for her own sake, and how much he acknowledged himself rewarded in the practice of her rules: he finished this eulogium with adding, that no one could love and esteem M. de Turenne without being

ing the better man for it. His company and conversation inspired such hatred of deceit and double dealing, as made those, who were happy enough to be of the number of his friends, somewhat more than the generality of mankind. In this number the Chevalier was most particularly distinguished. That great man shewed a more than common esteem and affection for it, and he on his side was one of the most devoted of all his admirers.

Yet one word more of this illustrious shade and then I will take my leave of you. You know Pertuis and how great an esteem and devotion he had for him; as soon as he heard of his death, he wrote his Majesty the following biller. "Sire, I have lost Mr. de Turenne, I feel my heart unable to support this disastrous stroke: therefore as I am sensible that I am no longer in a condition to serve your Majesty as I ought to do, I humbly request your Majesty's permission to lay down my government of Courtrai."

The Cardinal de Bouillon prevented the letter from being given to the King; but fearing least he might come in person, he informed his Majesty of the effects Pertuis's grief had had on him. The King appeared to enter with great goodness and indulgence into his sentiments, and told the Cardinal de Bouillon that he esteemed Pertuis the more for this mark of attachment to his friend and benefactor, || and that he thought him too honest a man, not to discharge his duty in whatever situation he was in. This great and good man had a patrimony of 40,000 livres per annum; and M.

|| He had been captain of the guard to M. de Turenne.

Boucherat says, that after all his debts and the several legacies he has bequeathed are paid, there will not remain more than 10,000 livres per annum. These are the vast treasures he had amassed during the service of fifty years. Adieu, my dearest child, I embrace you a thousand times, and with a tenderness not to be expressed.



LETTER CCLXVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday, 30 August 1675.

I HAVE taken the resolution to part from hence on the fourth of next month; I shall go directly to Orleans. I shall find there Mr. d'Harouïs, and from thence we shall embark on Sunday after mass. I very much regret the interruption of our correspondence, which will be a little irregular: but my life is full of things which pain me to the very soul.

I am just returned from the service performed for Mr. de Turenne at St. Denis. Madam d'Elbeuf came in to fetch me thither, and the Cardinal de Bouillon invited me in a manner not to be refused. The ceremony was very mournful: his corpse was placed in the middle of the church. It arrived there the night before with such a pomp of martial sorrow, that Mr. Boucherat, who received it, and, who the evening before had almost died with weeping, did nothing but augment the
sighs

sighs and groans of all that family, and of all the domestics who were in mourning, and in tears. There were none of his friends present, but messieurs Boucherat, de Harlai, de Barillon, and Monsieur de Meaux. Madam d'Elbeuf almost expired with grief; with her vapours were mingled her sorrows. It was a melancholy spectacle to see all his guards standing, every one with his partisan on his shoulder, round the corpse they had so ill defended. At the conclusion of mass they carried the bier, and placed it over the great altar, where it is deposited. The ceremony of this translation was very moving; every one was in tears, and many were not able to restrain their cries. At last we got into the chapel, which Madam d'Elbeuf filled with the most passionate lamentations. When this was over, we returned from thence to a very melancholy entertainment at the Cardinal de Bouillon's, who would have us there.

I shall go to-morrow and pass the evening at Livré, to bid adieu to my charming abby. The Abbé has been there three days: he talks of nothing but a retreat; it is the grand mode at present.

I know no news from Fontainebleau, but only that they are to play four tragedies of Corneille, four of Racine, and two comedies of Molière.

What say you to the Prince, who has raised the siege of Hagenau, as he put the enemy to flight the last year at Oudenarde.

Adieu, my dear, embrace me I conjure you; and tell me no more that you do not deserve my extreme tenderness. Why should you not deserve it, if it be true that you love me? On what other account can you be unworthy of it? Embrace me once more, my dear; and be contented to let me love you more than myself, since you own you love me a little.



LETTER CCLXVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday, 4 September, 1675.

MADAME de Puifieux has wrote me word, that as she heard I had an intention to set out as yesterday, she would advise me to defer it till Monday. I acquiesced without any further reasoning, and so my dear here am I till Monday. The Count returns on Friday. The siege of Hagenau is raised: matters are far from turning out so bad as you foresaw; though Montecuculli has not abandoned his designs, but still continues to harass the Prince, who finding himself rather over matched, has retired towards Schlestat. M. de Lorraine † in writing to his daughter ‡ on occasion of the last defeat (*at Consarbruck*) never mentions the Marshal de Crequy in other terms than the *honest Marshal, honest Crequy*. There is a

† Charles IV. duke of Lorraine.

‡ Anne de Lorraine, countess de L'Isle-bonne.

certain *air malin* in that letter very much resembling the turn of mind of *his Highness my Father*.

M. de Sanzei's people give a shocking account of that affair. We had two thousand men out a foraging, and were but five thousand against twenty two thousand. The river was supposed impassable, whereas it was fordable in three different places by which the enemies army crossed over and attacked our's in flank. La Trouffe gave his opinion upon the matter, but he was not heard. The Marshal fought like a man beside himself, and when he saw all was lost threw himself into Tréves, which he defends like an Oroondates. He saved a great number of the troops, the rout and confusion was greater than the slaughter. M. de Sanzei's body cannot be found; his people saw him rush into the midst of one of the enemies squadrons, known by the name of *Sans Quartier*,* crying out that he desired none, he fought a considerable time, the remains of his regiment rallied, but not a word was heard of him: Can it be supposed otherwise than that he was left upon the field of battle, where they saw no opportunity of looking for him immediately, nor probability of knowing him afterwards? Poor Madam de Sanzei came here on Saturday about seven in the morning, just as I was getting into my coach to go to Lewri. I immediately returned and did not leave her for the whole day. She expected to have met with her husband's people with his equipage, which came in about an hour afterwards; it was enough to make one weep to see such a train of poor, meagre woe-begone wretches. She is to set out in a few days for Autrui: she is greatly af-

* i. e. who neither received nor gave quarters, like the hussar regiment of death among the Prussians.

flitted and her tears are those of real sorrow. She was advised not to go into mourning yet. I could not help smiling at such a ridiculous notion. There is as much likelihood of seeing poor de Sanzei again, as of seeing the patriarchs, or St. John Baptist. Can any thing be more foolish than to make a doubt of his death? And, at last, to pull off the crape and be with child again. In short, the only way to be always ready to receive one's husband is never to marry again.

The Chavalier de Coislin † is returned home since the death of Mr. de Turenne, declaring that he could no longer serve after having lost that great man; that his health was greatly impaired, and that it was only with a view of following that hero that he had undertaken the last campaign; but that since he was gone, he should retire to Bourbon. The King, being informed of these speeches of his, has already disposed of his regiment, and declares, that if it was not in consideration to his brothers he would send him to the Bastille. Now I think you have had enough of the marvellous; it seems you grow weary of it, and so we shall furnish you with no more. It was your own desire to hear some extraordinary adventures, you was served at wish; and now on a sudden you cry out, hold, we have done.

Faucher of the Hotel d'Estrees came to see me yesterday, he is returning to Rome by

† Charles Cæsar de Cambout de Coislin, knight of Malta, after quitting the king's service, retired from the court and the world, and gave himself up to the exercises of the strictest devotion. See *Necrolog de Port-Royal*, p. 80. Amsterdam edit. 1723.

the way of Savoy. We had a great deal of chat together; and he related to me the whole quarrel between the Pope and the Ambassador; he convinced me that *Marseilles* was still at a considerable distance from the purple: In short after having had a great deal of talk about Portugal and Savoy, and a thousand other things, he desired to see your picture. He is a connoisseur in painting. I with M. de Grignan and you had but been witnesses to the unaffected admiration with which he was struck, how much he praised the likeness, and what commendations he gave to the goodness of the painting, and the masterly execution that reigns in the piece: in short, he stood gazing like a fool for about half an hour. I told him I would shew him St. Geran's picture for an excellent piece, he has seen it, and I thought he would have beat me, he called me *ignorant*, and what was worse, *Woman*. He says the features are the most masterly, and what I looked upon as the worst parts of the picture became the most glaring beauties in his description. Here was a white! there was a glow of colours! Here the flesh seemed to yield to the touch! there the head and neck projected from the canvass, as if offering itself to meet you! so that you would have died with laughing at his manner of admiring every thing. He has made a great noise about it: I had Mr. de Lorges to see me yesterday, but more for the sake of seeing your picture than visiting me. He saw it and was charmed with it. I wish to carry it about with me. How very truly, and as I said to you the other day in one of my letters, that if any one was in love with me, they might esteem themselves very happy to be as much beloved by me as this dear resemblance is!

I fear

I fear the Prince is ill, I think I heard some such report. We are so far from having obliged Montecuculli to repass the Rhine, that he has drawn us towards Schlestad, and obliged us to abandon the Lower Alsatia. The Marshal de Crequy goes on like a devil at Tréves. His lady has got such a notion of Sanzei's being there with her husband, that Madam de Sanzei dares not put on her mourning till the end of the siege has determined it. M. de St Thore, going to reconnoitre the enemies motions at the head of a squadron of thirty horse, fell in with upwards of two hundred of the enemies horse; he was immediately deserted by his men; the enemy offered him quarters, but he answered, he would have none, upon which he was instantly cut in pieces; this was a very silly exit; but it has made his sister and her ugly husband the richest couple in France. I can very well guess how you have been overwhelmed with compliments on your two brother-in-law's * accounts: these echoes that repeat that for a month afterwards, like those at Oulioulles are very handsome. I am of your opinion that you would have had much less to do with a coward and a fool. Madam de Coëtquen† is not worthy of feeling grief so long as she does. About two years since, she took a little picture of Mr. de Turenne from Madam d'Elbeuf, who used

* The Chevalier de Grignan, and the Coadjutor of Arles, who had lately signalized themselves, one by his behaviour in the field, and the other by the elegant harangue he had had the honour of addressing to the king.

† Madam de Coëtquen had very ill kept a secret of importance that M. de Turenne had been weak enough to entrust her with. See *Memoires de la Fore*, p. 7. and p 75. edit, 1734.

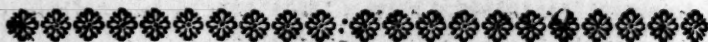
to wear it upon her arm. Madam d'Elbeuf asked her for it several times, she always told her, she had lost it, but we fancy it is not lost to every one. Ah illustrious hero, is it thus then thou art to be sacrificed ! But it is not the first instance of a great man's being affronted, when he is no longer the zeinth of his power.

Madam de Vaubrun is at present with our sisters of St. Mary's; she is almost distracted, and makes a jest of every thing that father St. Martha*, her confessor, says to her: she has had her husband's † body brought into the church. And the service performed for it was more magnificent than that for Mr. de Turenne at St. Denis. She has his heart preserved in a small case, and takes it out and handles it, and weeps at it every day; there are two candles constantly burning before it: She passes all her time from dinner to supper without stirring, and when they tell her that she has been about seven hours there, she is hardly to be persuaded that it is above half an hour. In short, she is under no sort of government, and it is much apprehended that she will loose her senses. It was affirmed yesterday that the Emperor had caused a service to be said for M. de Turenne.

* General of the Oratory.

† Who was killed the 1 August at the battle of Altenheim.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R CCLXIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday, 6 September, 1673.

I AM parting from hence, my dear, extremely melancholy at the thought of removing to a greater distance from you, and having our correspondence interrupted for some days. I leave a part of my domestics sick; but I shall have an opportunity to try how it is not to be served according to my own fancy, and to live a little without attendants. I shall be pleased to acquaint myself with the docility of my temper; and I shall follow the examples of courage and right sense which you give me. Does not madam de Coulanges do wonders, in bearing so well to spend her time in that melancholy manner at Lyons. It would be a fine thing, indeed, if I was only able to live with people that I am pleased with. I shall remember your sermons; I shall amuse myself with paying my debts, and living upon my provisions; I shall think much on you; I shall read, I shall walk. I shall write, I shall receive your letters. Alas! life passes away but too swiftly; some part of it is consumed in every place.

I carry with me an infinite number of remedies, good or ill; I have a kind opinion of them all, for they are well recommended, and prescribed to me by my good neighbours and friends.

I hope,

MARCHIONESS DE SÉVIGNÉ. 65

I hope, however, this magazine of medicines will be of little use to me, for I am extremely well in health.

The Prince, who has raised the siege of Hagenau, is a little surprised to find himself obliged to be on the defensive, and to be intrenched on the side Schechstatt: the gout and the month of October will not contribute to make him easy in that situation.

St. Thou dreamed the night before he was killed, that he had had a quarrel with the prince of Orange, and that he had said so many rude things to him, that the prince had ordered him to be abused by his guards. He told this dream, and it was by his guards that he was killed, very foolishly, for he would not accept quarter, though he was alone against two hundred. It was a very honourable indiscretion. All the world laughs at him, notwithstanding Voiture has taught us, that it is very uncivil to laugh at the dead.

Adieu, my dearest, I cannot tell you how much I am your's; for though I am more apt than you to express what I feel, yet my expressions do not equal my sentiments.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCLXX.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday, 9 September, 1675.

ADIEU, my dearest child, I am just getting into my coach. I leave Paris with the vexation of no longer receiving your letters so regular as usual, nor those of my son, for whom I am under great apprehensions, not so much on account of the Prince of Orange being so near them, as on account of M. de Luxembourg, whose fingers itch violently for an engagement. In short, our correspondence will now be all in confusion; and I fear I shall no longer be able to contribute any thing towards your amusements, for all the heaps of bagatelles that I used to send you will now be reduced to nothing: so that if you have any love for me it will be but to throw my letters by unopened.

I never met with a man so infinitely valuable as d'Haqueville; I know not how the rest of the family may be, but for him that we know, I do not think he has his fellow; I recommended an affair of mine to him the other day, he immediately made it his own, and though it was attended with very great difficulties, and that he had people of great rank and interest to dispute against, he never was at ease till he had compleatly finished it for me. So whenever you have occasion
for

for his service, you may make use of it without being under any apprehension of wearying him, as you may likewise of the fat Abbé, if you have any bills of exchange to negotiate ; it is good you know to be acquainted with every one's talent.

You will be at no loss for news ; our good la Troche will furnish you with every thing of consequence, but as you say, all is well, the rest of the year will be all peace, a tranquility. Only think of the great Prince de Condé retiring and acting upon the defensive, with the month of October and the gout before his eyes. Mr. de Lorraine was not for having them waste time about the siege of Trèves, " Consider the thing, gentlemen, " says he, we shall certainly perish here, there are " four thousand men in Trèves, besides a marshal " of France in a posture of defence." And indeed, the marshal performed wonders ; he cleans the trenches every two or three days in the neatest manner imaginable ; but after all, my dear, nothing is impregnable : every thing must at length yield to superior force.

I took my leave yesterday of M. de la Garde, if he should be desirous of embracing you let him do it, and place it to my account. I have a very great esteem and friendship for him. Let me exhort you, my dear, to be careful of your health if you have any love for me. I suppose you request the same thing of me, and I give you my word I will for your sake be particularly careful of it. Let me hear frequently from you, and with all those little circumstances that are so pleasing to friendship of a certain degree. Pray write to our Cardinal. Do you know that you was greatly mis-
taken

taken in your notions about his present, and I assure you he was not a little piqued at your stiffness in refusing this last token of his esteem and friendship. A refusal can never sit well in cases of this kind, and where the thing is in itself of so trifling a value; you will find no one to side with you in your opinion; you should always be diffident of following your own notions singly.

We laughed till the tears came into our eyes about your Madam de Charce, and her daughter the fair Phillis of nine and thirty: I think I see her here; you pretend that you have no genius for story-telling, nothing in the world could be related with more humour, nor can any one write more agreeable than you do; but it would make one weep to be in a country where they make such a burlesque of their mourning. And now I think I have nothing more left to say; so away with me to the rocks: Here, Mr. L'Abbé, let us be gone: It's done, my dear Countess, Adieu.

*Je vais partir belle Hermionne
Je vais exécuter ce que l'Abbé m'ordonne,
Malgré le péril qui m'attend †*

This is merely for the sake of saying something, for our province is now as calm as the Soan.

† A parody on the parting scene in the opera of Cadmus.

Thus English'd,

Yes fair Hermione! I leave thee now,
I leave thee lovely mistress of my fate!
Whether the Abbe orders me, I go
Regardless of the dangers that await.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCLXXI.

To the Same.

Orleans, Wednesday, 11 September, 1675.

HERE I am, my dear, ready to embark on our Loire, as you remember the pretty voyage you and I made here together once? I shall often think of it: But however terrible your Rhone may be, I wish I was as near trusting myself to its discretion. Mr. de la Trouffe is to return hither on his parole, but is not to have the government of Phillippeville. We cannot guess what fortune has in reserve for him, perhaps a musquet ball at last; heavens forbid!

I will write to you from all the places I can: You say, that hope is so pleasing! alas! it must be so in a degree beyond what you describe it, to enchant more than half the world in the manner it does. I am of the number of those who are most attached to its court. I carry with me the dissatisfaction of not hearing from my son; I quit with pain the opportunity of receiving news from the army. I sent him word the other day, that I was going to put my head into a sack, where I should neither see nor hear any thing that passes in the world.

I am going to send you from Orleans all the remains of my intelligence; I pretend still
to

to be telling you news; you will imagine from what author it comes. It is certain that—— are really separated: but the damsel is frequently grieved, and that even to tears, to see how very easy her gallant is without her. He only regrets his liberty, and that safe retreat from the lady of the castle; whatever the reason be, his heart was little interested in any thing farther. He has met with such a society that hits his humour; he is gay, and pleased to be free from trouble. The fair one trembles and weeps, as fearing this may imply a diminution of his flame; and if it were otherwise, she would not be without her sorrows. Thus repose is banished from this place. You may make your reflection on this, as on a certain truth: I believe you understand me.

With regard to England, Mademoiselle de K—— has not been disappointed in any thing she proposed; she desired to be a mistress to the King, and she is so. He lodges with her almost every night in the face of all the whole court: She has had a son, who has been acknowledged, and presented with two dutchies. She amasses treasure, and makes herself feared and respected by as many as she can. But she did not foresee that she should find a young actress in her way, whom the King doats on; and she has it not in her power to withdraw him from her. He divides his care, his time, and his health between these two. The actress is as haughty as Mademoiselle; she insults her, she makes grimaces at her, she attacks her, she frequently steals the King from her, and boasts whenever he gives her the preference. She is young, indiscreet, confident, wild, and of an agreeable humour; she sings, she dances, she acts her

part

part with a good grace. She has a son by the King, and hopes to have him acknowledged. As to Mademoiselle, she reasons thus: This dutchess, says she, pretends to be a person of quality; she says she is related to the best families in France; whenever any person of distinction dies, she puts herself in * mourning. If she be a lady of such quality, why does she demean herself to be a courtizan? she ought to die with shame. As for me, it is my profession; I do not pretend to any thing better. The King entertains me, and I am constant to him at present. He has a son by me: I pretend that he ought to acknowledge him, and I am well assured he will, for he loves me as well as he does Mademoiselle. This creature gets the upper hand, and discountenances and embarresses the dutchess extremely. I like these original characters.

I thought I could write nothing better from Orleans; these at least are truths. I am extremely well; and I find the convenience of being a substance that thinks, and reads; were it not for these privileges, our good Abbé would amuse me very little. You know he is generally employed in admiring the casket in which he keeps his dear Louis-dor's; but while he is counting them over, and feeding his eyes with them, the cardinal † Commendon is very agreeable company to

* Mademoiselle K — went into mourning for the King of Sweden; a little after the King of Portugal died. Her rival appeared in a mourning coach, and made her this proposal: Let us agree to divide the world, you shall have the Kings of the north, and I the Kings of the south.

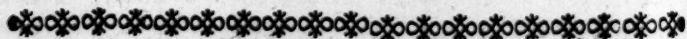
† The life of cardinal Commendon by Flechier.

me.

me. The weather and the roads are extremely pleasant: We have such fine days, as we used to say are made of chrystal, in which we are neither sensible of cold nor heat. Our equipage would carry well by land; it is for our diversion we chuse to go by water.

To prevent your inquietude, I am in perfect health; I am very regular in the management of it, with a view of pleasing you. I love you, my dearest, and my tenderness makes the most delightful employment of my mind.

I do not boast of a friendship with Mr. lePremier, but I have seen him frequently at Mr. de la Rochefoucault's, at Madame de Lavaradin's, at his own house, and twice at mine. He finds me amongst his friends, and you know what kind of reverberations that causes.



L E T T E R CCLXXII.

Tours, Saturday, 14 Sept. 1675.

I RECEIVED your letter, my dear, at Orleans, the moment before I went into the boat: It furnished a very pleasing provision, and was a great consolation to me in all my voyage. Amongst many agreeable things in what you write to me, there is one that I am peculiarly touched with. You tell me that I take a great deal of trouble on your account, but that it is with perfect ease to myself, and that this makes it the highest obligation.

gation. This is entering so well into my thoughts, that I am overpaid by this single sentiment. I shall one day have it in my power to give you a very agreeable entertainment, by obliging you with the sight of some of your own letters.

I know not what to say to you more of M. de Turenne, nor of Pertuis; I fear he will be comforted in my absence. I left Madame de Languron ready to die; but, my dear, I will not answer for any thing: I know nothing; I have my head in a sack. I hear, however, that Trèves is taken. I doubt Sansé will hardly be found again; his wife is the more to be lamented.

*Quanto gli douria parer il dubbio Buono,
Se doveu soffrir tanto del certo!*

I think this consideration is decisive.

I suppose that Mr. de la Trouffe is permitted to return upon his parole, and that he has not lost much of his equipage. I should pity him, if he had not recovered the possession of that idol of his soul, his dear charming Cassette.

I easily comprehend the agreeable things Madame de Vaudemont writes to you: she is very amiable. I honour the amity you preserve for each other, in spite of all that separates you: I commend you for continuing your correspondence with fidelity.

I lodged this night at * Veret; Mr. d'Efiatknew

* This fine seat on the bank of the Cher, belongs at present to the count d'Aginois.

of my voyage; he came to the river side with the abbé to receive me. His house surpasses every thing I have seen of beautiful, agreeable, and magnificent: the country is more delightful than any other spot upon the habitable earth; I should never end, if I attempted to describe it. Mr. and Madame Dangeau came hither to dine with me, and are gone to Valencé. Mr. d'Esfiat accompanied us in our return hither; we travelled about a league and a half through a road covered with flowers; he has just taken his leave of us with a thousand different expressions of amity for you.

I have nothing to write upon, but a little paper borrowed from the hostess, which forces me to conclude. To-morrow we return to our boat, and steer our course to Saumur. I saw at Veret letters from Saumur. It is thought the Prince of Orange will retake Liege. I am afraid that Mr. de Luxembourg will endeavour to hinder him, or attempt some siege: this gives me concern for my poor Sévigné. It is said, that the Prince will not tarry in Germany till the winter, and that Mr. Schombourg will be sent thither. My dear, it is not for the sake of telling you news, but only of talking to you, that I write all this. I remembered the other day at Blois a place so delicious, where we walked with the Count de Chappelles, where he made a Parodie on this Sonnet:

† *Je veux finir mes Jours dans l'Amour de Marie.*

My dear, how much I am vexed to leave you, and how dearly I love you! I embrace

† I will end my days in the love of Maria.

you

you with a heart that knows no equal. If this offends Mr. de Grignan, I am sorry for it, and I appease him with a kiss.

The history of the Croisades is very fine; but the stile of father Maimbourg gives me a very great distaste. He has gleaned all the false delicacies which are to be found in the conversations of such as affect politeness. If we excuse his stile, it is for the sake of the history.



L E T T E R CCLXXIII.

To the Same.

Tuesday, 17 September, 1675.

Here is an odd date for you.

*From the bottom of a boat,
On the water afloat,
Not a house in our sight,**

think I might add,

This is folly outright. †

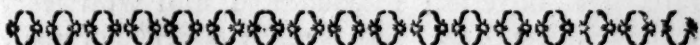
FOR the water is so very low,
and we are so often aground, that I heartily wish

* Je suis dans un bateau,
Dans e Courant de l'Eau
Fort loin de mon Chateau.

† Ah quelle folie!

for my equipage again, but that is out of reach for some time. The water becomes tiresome when one is alone. A Count des Chapelles, and a Mademoiselle de Sévigné are wanting to enliven the scene. In short, it is a mere folly to take a boat at Orleans, or even at Paris, only that it is the fashion, as it is at Chartres to buy chapelets. I told you that I saw the Abbé d'Effiat at his fine house, I wrote to you from Tours, from thence we went to Saumur, where we saw Vineuil and *re-lamented* M. de Turenne. He seems greatly affected with his loss; you will pity him when I tell you he is in a place where there is no one that has seen Turenne. Verneuill is grown very old, very phthisicky, very slobbering, and very devout; but still has wit; he sends you a thousand and a thousand compliments. It is thirty leagues from Saumur to Nantes: we determined to go it in two days, and got into Nantes as this day: with this view we were upon the water some part of the night; but unfortunately we ran aground about two hundred yards from the place where we were to go ashore to lie, and could not get out of the boat; so we put back and landed at another place, and following the barking of a dog we got about midnight to a little hut, but the most wretched poor place you can possibly conceive: there we found two or three old women spinning, and some fresh straw, upon which we all lay down without pulling off a rag of cloaths. I should have diverted myself extremely with this scene had it not been for thinking of our poor Abbé, whom I was heartily ashamed to have exposed to such a fatiguing journey. At day-break we re-imbarked, but were again so compleatly stranded, that it was above an hour before we could get afloat again, however we were resolved to get to Nantes though

though against both wind and tide. We were forced to row all the way. When we got there, I found your letters; and as they told me the post was in his way to Ingrande; I let him take this little billet with him *en passant*. I am very well, and want only somebody to chat with. I shall write to you from Nantz as you may imagine. I am very impatient to hear from you, and about M. de Luxembourg and his army: for I have had my head in a sack these nine days. Adieu my dear.



L E T T E R CCLXXIV.

To the Same.

Nantes, Friday 20 September, 1675.

I HAVE just received my dear child's letter, wherein she supposes me a wanderer on the borders of the sea: can any thing be more just than these suppositions? I wrote to you constantly on the road, and even from my little boat as long as I was able. I got about nine o'clock at night to the foot of this great castle wall, just in the very place from whence our Cardinal made his escape: we heard a small bark rowing towards us, and a voice that cried, Who goes there? I had my answer ready, and in an instant I saw Mr. de Lavardin come out of the little door with five or six flambeaux before him, and accompanied by several of the nobles; he immediately came up to give me his hand with all the politeness imaginable. I am persuaded this must have made a very pretty scene from

the water, and I know that it gave my boatmen no small idea of their passengers consequence. I eat a very hearty supper, for I had neither eat nor slept for near four and twenty hours. I lay at M. de Haroüis': there is nothing but feasting and merriment going on at the castle and here. Mr. de Lavardin never leaves me: he seems greatly pleased with an opportunity of conversing with me: he has given me the whole detail of the history of this province, and the different conduct of those who have the government of it; this gives me no small pleasure, and in return I acquainted him with every thing relating to us. He is really possessed of many great and good qualities; he has given proofs of an assurance and courage which have hitherto done him great service; and on a sudden he is all mildness and submission to the governor, which contribute still more to enhance his reputation. He has given the *Monseigneur* to Feuillade and Duras, and by way of familiarity, has thrown in *My most honoured Lord*. This is some comfort for you, and may serve to shew you what style you must make use of if you write at all to these gentlemen.

We are going to Silleraye*: Mr. de Lavardin is come to conduct me thither, and from thence to the Rocks, where I shall be on Tuesday. The Abbé is extremely well, and I am if possible much better. Mr. de Guitaut has wrote to inform me of his wife's being safely delivered, which gives me no small satisfaction, as I was under some uneasiness about her, as I am indeed about you; but I dare not suffer myself to dwell upon a thought of that kind, which could not fail to afflict

* An estate belonging to Mr. d'Harouïs.

me greatly were I assured that were the case with you. M. de Coulanges tells me that poor Madam de Sanzei has at length put on mourning; la Mouffe was with her at Austrin, but is come back again, though she has more need of him now than ever. I am still under apprehensions for my son. I fancy that Mr. de Luxembourg has still a great desire to risk a little battle: Oh! it is a cruel profession!

I am rejoiced, my dear, to find that you have the Archbishop with you; I judge the nature of your conferences, and guess at all your little propositions and resolutions: pray salute the Archbishop most respectfully for me. I heartily wish him a good state of health both for his own sake and that of his family and friends. Mr. d'Haroüis makes you a million of compliments: we read the newspapers here, I think that passage which you remark, very droll. M. de Montgaillard was killed about five or six days ago, by a brother of Tonquedec's; it seems they had a quarrel, and Montgaillard fell upon the other in a violent fury, gave him several blows with that cane that he used to such good purpose with his lieutenants; Pongan, that was the other's name, immediately drew his sword, and ran him through the body; upon which he fell down dead: this scene passed in a small town in Lower-Brittany, where Mr. de Chaulnes happened to be at the same time: You shall not want for news, child, from Brittany. Lord! how I pity you in having such letters as mine to read, and indeed I pity myself for having such stuff to write you.

I was under some uneasiness this morning about my son: but I have since seen by all the papers, that Mr. de Luxembourg intends to keep

keep in Flanders. You have doubtless heard of the infamous capitulation of Trèves†. I think it was very happy for the Marshal that he was only delivered prisoner to the enemy. The confederate army will now join that of the Imperialists; but we are certain that the Prince will not be obliged to fight, unless he chuses it: this is one of the advantages of being a good player at chess. M. de Coulanges is going to Lyons; he writes me word that he has left your picture in pledge with a merchant for some money he was obliged to borrow of him. The dear picture! I am naturally very fond of good painting; but I must own that its being so like you, does not add a little to the value I have for that particular piece. I shall be very sorry when your five months stay at Grignan is at an end; Linx and Lambese are far less pleasing than the unconstrained freedom of that Chatteau. But you have made all your visits, that is well: I and Vardes and my friend Carbinelle, what is become of them? Felix's‡ son is made bishop of Apt or Gap or some such name.

† The marshal de Crequi after having defended Trèves for the space of a whole month with the utmost valour, was at last made prisoner of war by the perfidy of a captain of horse, named Buisjordan, who found means to stir up the whole garrison against him, and being let out at the gates of the town, privately went over to the besiegers, and drew up articles of capitulation unknown to the marshal. This wretch was afterwards taken as he was endeavouring to escape into the enemies territories, and had his head severed from his body at Mentz.

‡ M. Felix was the King's first surgeon, and his son was afterwards translated to the bishoprick of Chalons upon Saône.

Remember

Remember my dear that I received your letters on the ninth day, I tell you this *fuor di proposito* indeed, to let you see I am not quite in your antipodes.



L E T T E R CCLXXV.

To the Same.

Silleraye, Tuesday, 24 September, 1675.

I AM now, my dear, in a place where you was one day with me; but you would not know it again, for there is not one stone left upon another of what was standing then. M. d'Harouïs has built himself a fine house here: it is thirty toises in front, with two wings, and two pavillions; he had the plan from a celebrated architect at Nantes, but as he was not on the spot himself three months, during the whole time it was building, it has been very badly executed. Our Abbé is in despair about it; as for M. c'Harouïs, he only laughs at it.

I brought with me here a very pretty country girl, who pleases me extremely. She is a perfect Agnes, at least, as far as I can judge. I have made a discovery, that she has wit. She has an immoderate desire to learn every thing that is proper for a woman of good breeding and good sense, and above the level of those one meets with in the provinces. I have taken a great affection to her. Her mother is a ridiculous devotée. This

young girl has made the best use that is possible of her Confessor. He is a Jesuit, and a man of learning. She begged him to pity her ignorance and instruct her; her ingenuity and application engaged him to teach her a little of every thing; and her understanding is so far improved, that there is scarce any thing she has not a competent knowledge of. All this is concealed under a lovely countenance, finely regular, an extreme modesty, an amiable timidity, and a bloom of seventeen years. There are many of the learned who would doubtless offer their services to import wit to her, in the manner *la Fontaine* describes; but she does not seem inclined to receive any instructions of this kind: however, time, which alters every thing, may perhaps induce her to change her opinion. It is impossible to sing in a more agreeable manner the airs of the opera; and the delicacy of her ear is equal to that of her voice. I wish I had her with me instead of *Mademoiselle du Plessis*, at least for a month or two. I believe she would not be averse to it; she wishes her mother was of my humour.

There came to see me a few days since, a gentleman with whom I have some business, which I am endeavouring to conclude in order to hasten my return. This gentleman brought with him a son of his wife's, about twenty years old, whom I thought to be, without exception, as agreeable figure of a man as I had ever seen. I told him I had seen him five or six years ago, and that I wondered, like *Mr. de Monbason*, how it was possible to grow so much in so little time. Upon this, there came forth from the middle of that pretty face a hideous disagreeable voice, which
pro-

pronounced in a ridiculous tone that sage observation that ‘ill weeds grow apace.’ I looked at him again, and methought all his charms were vanished, and he was metamorphosed into a satyr. If he had given me a blow on the head with a cudgel, I could not have been more vexed at him. I vowed I would never more place any confidence in physiognomy: no, my dear, I assure you I have done with it; I renounce all trust in it for the future.



L E T T E R CCLXXVI.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 29 Sept. 1675.

I WROTE to you, my dear, from every place where it was possible to do it; but as I was not very exact with respect to our dear d'Hacqueville, and the rest of our friends, they have been in a strange taking about me, I am really under too many obligations to them, they did the Loire the honour to suppose that it had swallowed me up, poor thing! I am sure I should have been the first it ever had served such a scurvy trick; I found no inconvenience from it, but that its waters were not quite deep enough sometimes.

I set out from Silleraye the day after I wrote to you from thence, which was on the Wednesday; M. de Lavardin put me into my coach, and M. d'Harouïs loaded me with provisions of all kinds.

kinds. We got here the Thursday. The first creature I met was Mademoiselle du Pleffis, more frightful, more foolish, and more impertinent than ever. I am really ashamed of the liking she has taken to me, and I swear *by this good sword*, that I will not encourage it by the least complaisance, friendship, good-nature, or mark of approbation: I say things abominably rude to her, but for my sins she takes them all in good part, and thinks I am jesting with her. You may judge whether I tell you truth or not, after the story of the box of the ear, which I thought would have killed Pomenars with laughing. She is constantly at my elbow, but at present, indeed, she is taking the drudgery of the house off my hands; she is cutting out napkins for me, child!

I found my woods perfectly beautiful and gloomy; the trees which were so little when you saw them last, are all of them grown very large, beautiful, and flourishing; they have been cut, and now form a delightful shade; they are between forty and fifty feet high: do not you see something of a mother's fondness in this minute detail? consider I planted them myself, and have tended them when *they were no higher than this*; as M. de Monbason says of his children. It is a retreat formed expressly for meditation. I am persuaded you would make the most of it, were you here; I assure you, I am far from neglecting it: if the thoughts are not made absolutely black by it, they are at least turned to a dark grey; I think of you at every step, I regret your absence, I languish for your company, then your health, your affairs, the distance you are at from me, all this makes a terrible havock in my poor little brain: it requires the

the most absolute submission to the will of Providence, to meet what I do without despair. As to health, I am as well in that respect as I was ten years ago. I cannot conceive whence I have this perpetual spring, my constitution every way answers the purposes I require of it : I read, I divert myself, if I have any thing to do, I do it before the Abbé, the same as if he was in another place : this agreeable unconstraint, together with a little hope, just prevents me from being at the expence of a cord to hang myself withal.

I had no letters from you by the last post, which makes me somewhat uneasy. Neither do I know any more about the Coadjutor, nor la Garde, Mirepoix, nor Bellièvre, than if they were in another world ; I intend to rouse them a little. Do you not admire the King's good fortune ? They inform me, that *His Highness my Father* † is dead ; he was a good enemy : they say likewise, that the Imperialists have repassed the Rhine, to defend the emperor from the Turk, who presses him on the side of Hungary : all these are what we may call lucky stars for his Majesty, but makes us humble in Brittany, for fear of experiencing heavier punishments. I am going to pay a visit to the good Princess de Tarente, she has already sent me her compliments twice, and always enquires very kindly after you if she attacks me on that side, there is no holding out.

Adieu, my ever lovely and dear child, I frequently have lettrers from your brother ;

† Charles IV. duke of Lorraine, died the 17th of September. Madame de l'Islebonne his daughter, whenever she spoke of him, used to stile him, *His Highness, my Father*.

he is greatly concerned at not being able to get rid of this wretched Guidonage; but he should consider that there are a number present and pressing, who are to be provided for first, and who indeed, have merited it by their services; and these will always be preferred to one that is absent, and looked upon as already provided for: and besides, has not had an opportunity of shewing himself in any thing, except his impatience, being so long a subaltern, and that they do not care a farthing about. Well! this just makes good what we used to say; after a long and wearisome passage to find one's self nine hundred leagues from an harbour, and so on, you know!



LETTER CCLXXVII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 2 October.

IT is two days, my dear, since I received your letter: this was the tenth day; I might have received it sooner. If the post had arrived at Paris on Tuesday, I should have received it on Friday, instead of Monday. You see I am very curious and exact in my calculation, but I hope you will bear with them, and consider whence they proceed, and what they tend to. Your letter touched me sensibly: I fancy you are not unconcerned at this further remove; you speak of it with tenderness. As for me, I felt a grief from it, and still feel it every day. I thought the distance we
were

were at before was great enough ; a hundred leagues added to it increafes the pain it gives me ; I cannot dwell on this thought without a fresh occafion for your fermons. What you fay in two words of the little profit you receive from them yourfelf, is a tendernes I am much touched with. You fay you would have me write to you of my woods ; the barrennefs of the fubject cannot make my letters difpleafing to you. Thefe walks have a beauty, a tranquillity, a repofe, a filence, to which I cannot yet accuftom myfelf. If I think on you, they infpire a tendernes ; whether I am fenfible of it, I leave you to imagine, for I am not capable of representing it in all its force. I am here all alone, and very much at eafe ; but I am in apprehenfion of company, that is, of constraint.

I have been to vifit Madame de Tarente ; ſhe received me with tranſport. Her opinion of you, ſhews ſhe has not altogether the taſte of a German : ſhe is pleaſed with your perſon, and, as ſhe imagines, with your wit. She does not want wit, according to her manner. She loves her daughter *, ſhe is wholly taken up with the thoughts of her ; ſhe tells me what ſhe ſuffers from her abſence, as the only perſon who am capable of condoling with her. I can give you a very good account of the court at Denmark ; I know nothing of that of France, but I ſhall not fail to ſend you the news of Copenhagen. I muſt acquaint you, that the Princeſs de la Trimoüille is a favourite of the Queen, who is her couſin German. There is a Prince, allied by blood to the King, very agreeable and very gallant, whom we have ſeen in France,

* Since Dutcheſs of Holſtein.

and who has a passion for the Princess; and the Princess may perhaps have some disposition not to hate him: but there is a favourite who is very powerful, called the Count Kinghs Toghmktsel, you cannot be a stranger to that name. This Count is likewise in love with the Princess, but she hates him; not but that he is very brave, and well made, has wit and politeness, but he is not a gentleman, and that single thought is enough to make a lady faint with pure aversion to him. The King is his confidant, and is desirous to conclude this marriage: the Queen is in the interest of her cousin, and favours the pretensions of the Prince: but the King opposes him, and the favourite makes him feel the weight of his jealousy, and of his power. The Princess weeps, and writes to her mother letters of forty pages. She has demanded her dismissal from the court, but neither the King nor the Queen will consent to it, though for different reasons. The Prince is removed from the court on several pretexts, but he always finds some plausible occasion to return. At present they are engaged in a war against the Swedes; and the rivals are piquing themselves on the performance of romantic actions to please the Princess. The favourite tells her, as he takes his leave of her, I see, madame, in what manner you treat me, but I am assured it is not in your power to refuse me your esteem. This is the first tome of the history; you shall not fail to have the sequel of it: I am resolved, that no person in France shall be better acquainted than you with the intrigues of Denmark. When I have no more to say of this court, I shall entertain you with † Pilois; there is no medium between these impor-

† A Dancing-master to the King of Denmark.

tant subjects, I must let you know however, that these are very great secrets: above all, I beg you not to pronounce the name of the Count Kinghs-Toghmksfel.

It is true, my dear, that this is a terrible year for the Marshal de Crequi: I think with you, that he is no where in safety or in repose, but amongst the enemy. He has a little dissipated the legions that were entrusted to him; but they obeyed him too well in the day of battle.

I am informed from all hands, that Mr. de Mirepoix is very much disabused as to the constraint of keeping his word, and that we shall not get the ratification from him but by dint of sword. I think, my dear, you very much forget the manner of thanking me, which I very much approved: it was by rejoicing with me at the opportunity I had of serving you; this was extremely obliging.



LETTER CCLXXVIII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 6 October 1675.

INDEED, my dear child, you relate a lamentable story about the loss of your poor letters; was it *Baro* who was guilty of such a piece of folly? you were all of you gay, and in high spirits, thinking to have entertained your friends compleatly;

completely; but it is the Archbishop whom I pity the most, as I know he never sets pen to paper, but on affairs of the last importance, and then, to find that he has taken all this pains only to have it lost in a box, or tumbled down a precipice, is really provoking. As for M. de Grignan, he is discouraged from letter-writing for the rest of his life. What an accident is this to befall an indolent man! you will see that he will never write again, for fear of losing his labour. If you acquaint the Coadjutor with this, he will not fail to make the most of it.

You certainly ought to have told me the names of the four ladies who came to assassinate you: as for me, I have always time to guard myself against disagreeable company; when I find they are coming on one side, I walk out of the way by another: this is a trick that I played the Senechal's wife of Vitre, no longer ago than yesterday, and then I scolded our folks, for not acquainting me of her having been there: this spark puts such tricks in one's head I think. Do you remember one day that we avoided the Fouesnells in that manner: I walk a great deal, these allies are extremely beautiful: I work too as you do, but thank heaven, I have not a little impertinent Montgobert with me, to put me to my shifts: I am in such perfect health, that I look upon myself, as a young girl of ten years old, that has had a sampler given to her, to amuse herself withal. I am extremely delighted with what Montgobert writes to me; there is a poignancy in her style, and a certain manner that is very pleasing: it is a great happiness to have so agreeable a companion in an house: I had such an one once in my life, to my no small joy.

You

You was highly diverted then, my dear, with my narrative from Orleans: I laughed at it myself, it was all I had left in my sack, that I thought worth sending you. You are very good to take pleasure in my long worded and dry descriptions of my woods and house; you certainly do it wholly out of love to me. But I think I made pretty well up for it, by my news from Denmark. The city of Rennes is threatened with having the parliament removed to Dinan, this would compleatly ruin the province. The punishment that is to be inflicted on that city will make no small noise.

My son writes me, that in all appearance he shall soon be with me here. Have you not got la Garde with you yet? and pray, where is our Coadjutor? I hear that M. de Villars is going ambassador to Savoy; I have likewise received letters from Nantes: if the Marquis de Lavardin, and M. d'Harouïs, were concerned in the Gazette of that place, you would certainly have found an article in it about my arrival and departure: I return you, my dear, all the care and concern you have for Brittany, for every thing, for twenty leagues round about you, is considerable to me. There was an Augustin came here the other day, he was a kind of wandering fryar, he had been all over Provence, and mentioned M. de Grignan five or six times, and M. d'Arles; I thought him a very clever man, and I am certain had I been at Aix, I should not so much as have looked at him. A propos, did I mention to you an admirable spying-glass that we diverted ourselves with in the boat? It is really a master-piece of its kind, it is rather a better one than that which the Abbé left with you at Grignan.

This

This glass brings objects quite home, at three leagues distance ; alas ! that it would those at two hundred ! You may easily guess the use we made of it on the banks of the Loire, but I have found a new method of using it, which is this : you know that one end brings objects nearer to you, and the other throws them off at a great distance : now this end I turn towards Mademoiselle de Pleffis, and in a moment I see her at three leagues distance from me : I tried this experiment the other day on her, and the rest of my neighbours ; this was very droll, but no-body knew what I meant by it, if there had been any one single person that I could have directed it to, it would have highly diverted me. When one is quite tired with disagreeable company, it is only to send for this glass, and turn it on that side that distances the objects. Ask Montgobert, if she would not have laughed heartily at this ? This is a mighty pretty subject to talk nonsense upon. If you have Corbinelle with you, let me recommend the use of the glass to you. Adieu, my dear, we are not mountains, as you say, so I hope to embrace you a little nearer than two hundred leagues : But you are going still farther off, tell them I have a great mind to set out for Brest. I hear that La Trouffe's good star is as bright again as it was, and that he is to have the post that was late Froulai's.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCLXXIX.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 9 October 1675.

I RECEIVED on Monday morning, your letter of Sunday sen'night? this is excellent dispatch, but alas, my dear child, it is all at an end, you are going to remove farther off, and I must no longer expect such regularity. I greatly sympathize with you in the regret with which you leave Grignan; the life you lead there, suits much better with you, than that continual parade you are obliged to keep up in great towns, and that eternal round of ceremony that is insupportable. I have written to d'Hacqueville, to desire him not to complain to me of the world of business he has upon his hands, for I know it is what he is fond of: he writes to you three times a week; now you would be very well contented to hear from him but once in that time, and the fat Abbé would excuse him another; so you see how easy he might make it to himself. I have proposed the same thing to him on my part, and write to him but once in eight or ten days, by way of setting him the example, but it is to no purpose: he does not understand such an act of indulgence, and he will write, as the judge would judge, right or wrong. I am really very sorry for the poor man, for I am sure all this fatigue must at last kill him: was you to see his tables, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, you would think you
was

was got into the general post-office : for my part, I shall not kill myself with writing ; I read, I work, I walk, and frequently do nothing ; *bella cosa far niente*, * says the motto on one of my trees, the other answers, *Amor odit inertes* †, one does not know which to believe, but this I know, that I do not like to meddle my brains with too much writing. I love to write to you indeed, because I can talk to you, gossip with you, and because I could not do without it ; but as for others, I write to them, only because I must do it.

I had a letter yesterday from Colligni, in which he asks my consent to marry my neice de Buffi, ah ! I give it him with all my heart : he is called, Lanheac, it is a family that our Cardinal has raised to the clouds. A propos ! he is employed in making medicines ; he certainly must stand in great need of them, when he can bring himself to take the pains of making them. Pray do not neglect writing to him ; you owe him at least, that mark of respect and gratitude ; you need be under no fear of breaking in upon his meditation, he is not yet in the third heaven. I have heard a thing that gives me no little uneasiness, which is, that Cardinal d'Etrées does all that he possibly can, both by himself and friends, to make the Pope change his resolution, with respect to our Cardinal's hat, and to give it to M. de Marfeilles : I assure you, a dagger would not pierce me more than a thing of that sort. And then our Cardinal is continually teizing his Holiness, to consider the reasons he has offered in his letter, for divesting himself of his dignity :

* How delightful is indolence !

† Love hates the sluggard.

now if they should take advantage of this unlucky circumstance, to make his Holiness change his opinion, would it not be enough to throw us all into despair? To speak to you in confidence, I have this as a secret from d'Hacqueville, perhaps he may have told you of it likewise; if so, you will use your own discretion. In the mean time let me assure you that I hate d'Estrees the most heartily in the world.

M. de Chaulnes is bringing four thousand men into Rennes to punish the inhabitants; nothing can exceed the confusion of that city, and the unspeakable hatred that the whole province has to the governor. We cannot tell where our states will be held now. I have desired M. de Lavardin and la Trouffe to send me back my son if they are not going to do any thing more this year: I want him much to be here, that he may be an eye witness of the difference there is in having only lands when one thinks one has estates. The poor exiles† on the coasts of the Loire know nothing of the crimes laid to their charge, and are very uneasy, under the uncertainty. Vassé was at a place about six leagues from Varet, so that I could not see him. Adieu thou most lovely, and most beloved! Count, count the hearts over which you reign, and do not forget mine in the tale. You will now have the coadjutor with you, and happy will you both be. They

† Messrs. d'Olonne, de Vasse, and de Vineuil were sent into banishment. After they were recalled, the King one day asked M. de Vineuil how he passed his time at Seaumur, the place of his exile. M. de Vineuil answered his majesty, that he went every day to the town-hall to talk of the news; and that one day there was a dispute arose in the company, about whom was the eldest, his majesty or his brother.

play extravagantly high at Versailles: The *Hoca** is forbidden at Paris under pain of death, and yet it is played at court: Five or six thousand pistoles of a morning is nothing to lose: This is no better than picking of pockets. I beseech you to banish this game from amongst you.

I am tired with perpetually hearing that the Imperialists have repassed the Rhine; no, they have not repassed it yet; I wish with all my heart they would do one thing or another. I have acquainted M. de Lavardin with the affair of M. d'Ambres; he was frequently thinking of it. So now our *grande*s† are a little mortified; they may easily judge that the person who gave the decision is concerned to support the dignities of his own creating: Well, you must follow the times, this does not happen to be your's



LETTER CCLXXX.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday 13 October, 1675.

YOU say very justly, my dear, that the dates contribute little to make the Letters of

* A game at cards, so called.

† This relates to the title of *Monsieur* (my Lord) which the old nobility refused to give to the Marshals of France, till the King decided the controversy in favour of the latter.

those

those we love agreeable. Alas ! why should our curiosity be so much confined to the affairs of the public ! Your health, your family, your least actions, your sentiments, these are what I am touched with ; and I am so well persuaded that you are in my way of thinking, that I make no difficulty of talking to you of the rocks, of Mademoiselle du Pleffis, of my alleys, of my woods, of the affairs of our Abbé ; of Copenhaguen, if occasion offers. You may therefore firmly believe, that every thing that comes from you appears to me very considerable, and that I am pleased to know every thing, even to your pieces of tapestry ; and if you want a fresh supply of needles to be employed on it, I can supply you with some that are admirable. I was employed yesterday on a piece of work as tedious as the company I had ; I never work but when I have company ; when I am alone, I walk, I read, or I write. La Pleffis incommodes me no more than Maria ; I am so happy as to have no inclination to listen to any thing she says, and find as little interruption from her presence as you do from some whom you have the same kind of regard for. In other respects, she has the best sentiments in the world ; I admire how all the grace of them is spoiled by her impertinence and her ridiculous behaviour. It is pleasant to hear what she says of my patience in bearing with her, how she explains it, and the obligations she fancies it lays her under to attach herself to me ; and how I serve her for an excuse for not visiting her friends at Vitré. It would make one smile, to observe her little arts to satisfy her vanity (for vanity is the growth of every soil) and her affected fears that I am growing jealous of a nun of Vitré, for whom she has a fondness. All this would make a notable country farce.

I must tell you the news of this province. Mr. de Chaulnes is at Rennes with a great number of troops. He has declared, that if they offer to appear in arms, or to raise the least disturbance, he will take away the parliament from that city. The fear of this makes them bear with every thing: I have not yet heard how these warlike men behave themselves with regard to the poor citizens. We expect Madame de Chaulnes, who comes to see the princess at Vitre: We are in safety under her protection; but I may assure you, that were I only present here, Mr. de Chaulnes would think it a pleasure to shew his regard for me; this is the only circumstance in which I could answer for him. I beg you to be under no inquietude; I am in safety here, as in a province which you say belongs to me.

D'Hacqueville has done me a great pleasure in removing the resentment I had against the Cardinal d'Etrees. He informs me that our Cardinal has been refused in a full consistory on his own Letter; and that after this last ceremony there is nothing more to fear: So that he is now the third time a Cardinal against his will; at least these two last times, for the first time, as I remember, he was not much displeased. Write to him to railly him upon this happy disappointment: Mr. d'Hacqueville is transported; I love him for it. I frequently receive billets from his eminence, and my answers are conveyed to him; I keep this fairy-commerce very secret and mysterious, it is the more dear to me: you ought not to fail to write to him too; you would be ungrateful, if you should not preserve a great attachment for him. He has been a little
indif-

indisposed, but he is now in good health ; he writes to me, that we have reason to be contented with his prudence in submitting to proper remedies.

Are not you very much afraid of Ruiter ? Ruiter is the God of sea-fights. Guittaut is unable to resist him : however the King's star resists him. There never was a star so fixed : it dispersed that great fleet the last year ; it made Mr. de Lorraine die ; it repulsed Montecuculli ; and it will make a peace, in order to the marriage of Prince Charles. I mentioned this last the other day to Mad. de Tarante ; she told me that he was already married to the Empress Dowager ; and that this marriage, though it has not been declared, would prevent the other. You will see that she will die, if this creates any inconvenience. Your reasoning upon affairs of state is so just, that it is easy to see that you are become a politician in your government.

La Trousse is at Paris, and at the court, oppressed with caresses and praises : he receives them in such a manner as is proper to augment them. It is said that he will have the charge of Froulai ; if it should be so, there will be a remove in that company, and I have desired our friend d'Hacqueville to give a little attention to it, for the sake of our poor Guidon, who languishes in his little post. I have sent to him to come hither : I have a mind to marry him to a little damsel, who is a Jewess by her race ; but in my opinion millions are always of a good family. This is a thing very much in the air ; I depend on nothing, after having failed of Mademoiselle d'Eubonne. Mad. de Villars writes to me of fresh wonders performed by the

Chevalier de Grignan; I believe they are only the accounts of his former actions renewed: but he is really a gentleman, who has the best reputation that can be desired. I pray God that the first gleam of hope for one of our daughters may succeed; it would be a very happy affair. The indolence of the coadjutor ought to cease on such occasions.

Let me tell you a handsome action of the procurator-general. He had an estate of the house of Believre, which was very legally made over to him, as a gift: but he returned it into the mass of goods that were given up for the satisfaction of the creditors. He said he could not accept such at present, when he considered that it was an injury to the creditors, who have honestly paid their money. This is very heroical; judge, whether he is not like to be for us against Mr. de Mirepoix: I know nothing more noble, or more ungenerous than these two opposite characters. Our good friend the † Abbé is still a hearty friend: he is the best champion we have. The obligations I have to him are innumerable; but that which makes me most sensible of them, is the amity he has for you, and his zeal for your affairs, and the manner in which he is preparing himself to confound Mirepoix.

I dare not think of seeing you; when this hope sinks too deeply into my heart, and is so unlikely to be gratified, it does me too much harm. I remember still what I suffered during the last illness of my poor aunt; and how soon the sight of you made me forget that grief: I have not

† The Abbé de Coulanges,

yet a prospect of receiving so much joy. You assure me that you are extremely well; I pray God that your health may continue: I have this article very much at heart. As for me, I am in perfect health: You would much approve the sobriety and exercise I use, and the confinement of myself, like a Carmelite, to seven hours of sleep. This laborious life pleases me; it resembles the country. I do not grow fat; and the air is so soft and kindly, that my complexion, which many have so long pretended to admire, is not yet changed. I wish you had the advantage of passing one evening here, you would find it preferable to all the pommades you can use.

Our province is so much taken up with punishments, that there is no thought of visits; and, without pretending to be overhaughty and reserved, I am very much pleased at it. Do you remember when we determined that there was nothing so good in the province as disagreeable company, for the pleasure of seeing them rise to take their leaves? It is a pleasure, which I shall not have this year.

My dear, if I should continue writing four hours, I should not be able to tell you to what degree I love you, and how dear you are to me. I am persuaded you will be under the care of providence, because you pay off your arrears. Continue your attention to your expences; this does not fill up any great breaches; but yet it contributes to make you easy, and that is no inconsiderable advantage. Is Mr. de Grignan discreet? I embrace him in that hope. I am entirely yours.



LETTER CCLXXXI.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 16 October, 1675.

NO, my dear, I do not entertain too high an opinion of Mr. de Lavardin; I think him to be such as he really is; I am not in the least charmed with his ill-bred pleasantries, and the indelicacies of his behaviour. I see him in the same light I have always done; but I am so just as to give true merit its due, though it be mixed with what is disagreeable. It is to his good qualities that I am attached: and I think myself very fortunate, in having expressed to you my opinion of him in the same manner at Paris; otherwise you might have suspected that I was induced to it by the charms of a good reception. In a word, I shall always wish that those whom I love may have more agreeableness; but I shall be satisfied, if they have as many virtues. He has more generosity and integrity than I have ever met with in a courtier; you would approve his manner of proceeding very much upon certain occasions, you who speak of him in this manner. This is what I have to say, my dear, in my own justification, which you may be pleased to impart to our good Abbé.

Mr. d'Hacqueville tells me, that to write once in a week is enough to give an account of your affairs, but not enough to satisfy his amity;
and

and that he would chuse rather to add a Letter than to retrench one. You may easily judge, that since the regulation I prescribed did not please him, I laid no restraint on his civilities, and left him the liberty of his ecritoire. Consider, that he writes with the same fury to all who are out of Paris, and visits every day all who remain here : such is the indefatigable race of the d'Hacquevilles. You may apply yourself to them, my dear, with perfect confidence ; their unconquered hearts are capable of going through with every thing difficult or laborious. I have no longer any thoughts of sparing him ; I resolve to employ him without remorse. If I should make a scruple of fatiguing him to death, he will die in the service of some other, who will have less consideration for him. He loves only those by whom he is thus oppressed : Let us then oppress him without discretion.

You have never seen these woods my dear, flourishing in so great beauty as they are at present. Mad. Tarante was here yesterday the whole day ; the weather was perfectly fine ; she talked much of you ; she admires you more than her little friend. Her daughter is sick ; she was very melancholy. I led her to her coach at the end of the great avenue : as she pressed me to retire, she told me I treated her with so much ceremony, that she believed I took her for a German : I replied, yes, Madame, I certainly take you for a German, I should sooner have obeyed your daughter-in-law. She understood me as well as if she had been born in France. Her birth, methinks, should oblige those who understand the world to treat her with respect. She has a romantic stile in every thing that she relates : I admire, that ever

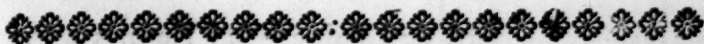
those who love romances should be displeased with it.

Mr. d'Hacqueville, with his own hand, (for it is not in this news-letter writ by his valet) acquaints me, that Mr. de Chaulnes arrived with his troops at Rennes on Saturday, October 12. I thanked him for his care, and informed him, that Mr. de Pomponne had suffered his picture to be drawn by Mignard. But this is only to be mentioned amongst ourselves; for you know his temper is as delicate as his complexion.

Do you know that the first president of Provence has beat his wife? I am much delighted with the flat of the sword: it is new and gallant. We all know our wives must be beat sometimes, said a country fellow, who presumed to be pleasant upon this occasion; but indeed the flat of the sword is less vulgar than a cudgel.

It must be owned that the good fortune of the French every where surpasses all that is credible. Our enemies do every thing for us, without giving us the least trouble; they retire, as it were in mere complaisance, when they see it is in their power to embarrass us. I will be able to answer to you for the peace; it seems to me to be so necessary, that in spite of the conduct of those who oppose it, it will make itself. Adieu, my dear; I love you with all my heart, and that in the plain literal sense, without abating the least tittle.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCLXXXII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday 20 October, 1675.

ICANNOT sufficiently admire the care and diligence of the post. In short, I receive on the 18th, the Letter that you write on the 9th, that is in nine days only after date; what can be wished for more? But, my dear, we must soon put an end to our admirations; for, as you say, you are going still farther off, that we may both of us be exactly in the spot which providence has assigned us. As for me, God knows I acquit myself very ill in my post; but you, good God! M. d'Anjers cannot do more; but when I think of our separation, and how much I deserve to enjoy the pleasure of being with you, and all your tenderness for me, and then reflect that we are placed at two different ends of the globe, you must excuse me if I cannot view this part of our history with a gaiety of heart. Common sense opposes it, and my infinite fondness still more. I have nothing to do but take refuge in a blind submission to the will of providence. I am very glad you have seen M. de la Garde: he does my mind great honour in approving of its turn: he is a very good judge: I am sorry you are going to lose him so soon, for he is really a worthy man.

F 5

Mr.

Mr. de Chalmes is at Rennes with four thousand men ; he has removed the parliament to Vannes, which has occasioned a terrible desolation. The ruin of Rennes brings with it that of the whole province. Mad. de Morbeuf is at Vitré ; she has made me a thousand compliments from Mad. de Chalmes, and from M. de Vines, who intends paying me a visit. I am not under the least apprehension about these troops on my own account : but I cannot help feeling for the despair and desolation our poor province is at present under. It is imagined we shall not have any assembly of the states here, or if we have, it will be only to buy off the taxes which we gave two millions, five hundred thousand livres to have taken off only two years ago, and which have been all laid upon our shoulders again ; and perhaps they may set a price too upon bringing the parliament back to Rennes. M. de Montmoron * is fled out of the town to a seat belonging to one of his friends, at about three leagues distance from hence, that he may avoid hearing the cries and lamentations of the people at seeing their dear parliament taken from them. You see I am quite a Bretonne, but you know one draws it in with the air one breaths ; and not only so, but every creature, without distinction, is in affliction the province throughout. Be under no concern about my health, my dearest ; I am extremely well. Mad. de Tarente has given me an essence that is a most effectual cure against the vapours ; and besides that, I have some of that fine Hungary water you sent, than which, nothing can be more reviving and excellent.

* He was a Sévigné, and Dean of the parliament of Brittany.

My dear, you will absolutely make la Plessis too vain, for I shall tell her how well you love her ; after all there is not a better creature living set a-side the few foibles I was mentioning to you the other day. My woods continue very beautiful still, and the verdure is an hundred times finer than that at Livri ; I do not know whether this proceeds from the nature of the trees themselves, or from the refreshing rains we have here ; but there is certainly no comparison ; every thing here looks as green now as in the month of May : the leaves that fall are of a brown colour indeed, but those that remain on the trees are not the least faded : you never observed this beauty in them. As to that blessed tree that saved your life, I am often times tempted to build a little chapel there : it seems to carry its head above all the rest, and exceeds them in bulk as well as stature, and with very good reason, for it saved you : I may, at least, repeat to it the stanza in Ariosto, wherein he wishes so much happiness and peace to another tree that had given him so much satisfaction. As to our sentences they are not at all disfigured, I visit them frequently, and if any thing, I think they are rather increased, and two trees that are close to each other, frequently present us with two opposite sentiments, as, *La lontananza ogni grand piaga salda** : And, *Piaga d'amor non si sana mais†*. There are five or six of them thus contradictory. The good Princess was charmed with them, as I am with the Letter you have written our good Abbé, on Jacob's journey to the Land of Promise, in your closet.

* Time is a cure for wounds however deep.

† The wounds of love are never to be healed.

Mad. de Lavardin has informed me of what is to be a secret for some time, that d'Olonne is going to marry his brother to Mademoiselle de Noirmoutier. He gives him all his lands in Poitou, besides a prodigious quantity of jewels and furniture. They are all at la Ferté-Milon, where this curious affair is to be made up. I never thought that d'Olonne would have given himself any concern about his name or family.



LETTER CCLXXXIII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 23 October, 1675.

I RECEIVED your Letter, my dear, just as I was going to Vitré. What you say relating to the Princess is so natural, so a propós, so very much the thing I desired, that I thank you for it a thousand times over. I read Mad. Tarante that part of your Letter that relates to her, and she is delighted with it. Her daughter is ill, but not so ill but that she still receives Letters from her, but they are all in an unfinished stile: they are full of *dear mamia's*, and childish fondnesses, though she is turned of twenty.

MADAME writes Mad. de Tarante very long Letters in German, which I get her to explain to me. Her Highness writes to her with a
great

great deal of familiarity and kindness, and expresses a longing desire to have her with her. I have a notion that Mad. de Monaco would have reason to be afraid of our Princess, if she was a Catholick, for her place would suit this latter admirably well; and MADAME declares to her that she shall never be easy till she has her about her. Mad. de Monaco was one day a little hard upon the good Tarante; when MADAME, notwithstanding the great seeming regard she has for her, seemed much displeased, and immediately silenced her.

Mad. de Chaulnes is to come to Vitré to pay a visit to the Princess, and there I shall have an opportunity of paying my respects to my lady governess, and the little personage, which will save me a great deal of trouble. I have had Mad. de Marbeuf with me for a day; she is a woman professes a great esteem for me, and has really a number of excellent qualities, and a heart that is truly great and sincere. She has been an eye-witness to all the disturbances in our province, and acts some of them to the life. There are some circumstances that would make you die with laughing, and that you would hardly credit; but some day or another when we are together, they will serve admirably to pass away an hour or two. This Marchioness de Marbeuf is going to Digne for the rheumatism; she will call to see you, and let me desire you to receive her as one of my friends. d'Hacqueville assures me that during the time of your assembly he will take care to furnish you with news. I have returned him many thanks for his care. He tells me that our parliament is removed, and that Mr. de Chaulnes is at Rennes
with

with a number of troops, and all this with *his own hand* †.

Our Cardinal is not only *recardinalized*, but you must know, he has had an order at the same time from his Holiness, to leave his retreat at St. Michael, and return to Commerci, where he now is: I fancy he will live very retired there, and leave off all state and house-keeping. So now he is just what we always wished him to be. In my opinion his Holiness has acted extremely right in the whole of this affair. The letter from the consistory is a perfect panegyric: I should be unwilling to die without once more embracing his dear eminence. You should by all means write to him, and not forsake him under the false notion of his being in the third region. One can never be so abstracted as not to be pleased with the marks of remembrance from those we love.

You are afraid, you say child, that the wolves should eat me, that must be when they can get nothing else; I don't know but that they might make a pretty good meal of my little person, but I am so surrounded by my infantry, that I fear

† He was so fond of writing, and making himself a man of intelligence, that he even informed Madam de Sévigné of things that passed on the very spot where she was; frequently for want of time to answer all his supposed calls of correspondences, he would employ one of his own servants to sit down and write letters of news: it was only his particular friends that he indulged with news from his own hand. In short, his unwearied assiduity to serve all his acquaintance even in the most trivial things, grew into a proverb, and d'Hacqueville was a name for an officious person.

nothing.

nothing. *Beaulieu** desires you will believe that he intends to make his court to you, by the care he takes of *Mama*. His wife is not brought to bed yet, those creatures never reckon right. You desire me, my dear, to leave you within doors a little, when I go to take my walks, but indeed, I will not, for I should then make my walk too short, so I am resolved to take you with me, even though I expose you to the dews a little; the dews here are not dangerous, they will do your complexion as much good as a wash.

I cannot set about distinguishing the rights of the *Other*†; I am persuaded they are very extensive, but when one longs to a certain degree, and one's whole heart is filled with that passion, I think it is very difficult to make so nice a distinction; but in this respect, every one acts as they please, or as they can. For I think one cannot be always the mistress of regulating the sentiments in this case; happy are those, who have the appearance of reason on their side. At all events, I am persuaded, that you will prevent my becoming ridiculous, and on my side, I endeavour to govern myself as prudently as I can, and to be troublesome to no one. This is all I know of the matter.

Madame de Tarente has made me a present of the prettiest little dog in the world, it is a spaniel, and has all the beauty, good-nature, and agreeable little tricks imaginable, only it does not

* A Valet of Madam de Sévigné.

† Madame de Sévigné is speaking here of the rights of love and friendship, and by the word *Other*, she means love,

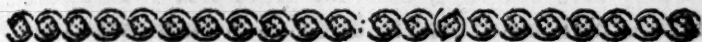
love me; but I am easy about that, for I can despise those, who have despised poor *Morphite*. You cannot think how pretty it is, to see the little creature running before me, and hunting up and down the alleys.

The Archbishop of Arles has informed us of the excellent order in which he has put your affairs; God be praised, and may he watch over them for the time to come. He mentions likewise, the marriage of Mademoiselle de Grignan, which I greatly approve of: this affair should by no means be neglected, nor dropt. Employ d'Hacqueville in it, during the absence of the Coadjutor; he is a most excellent creature, to conquer delays of all kinds, by his indefatigability, and assiduity: You want such a head as his, to carry the matter properly on with M. de Montausier; it is just one of those kind of businesses in which d'Hacqueville has not his fellow.

I thought it would have been too rude to have refused Madame de Fontevraud † the picture, for as every body is ready to give up every thing there, and happy it can be received; I thought it would shew to have very little of the courtier, or indeed of politeness in me, not to do like the rest; but you do not blame me, and so I am quite easy. Adieu, my dearest child, I will not say any more to you about my love for you, but do you say something about your's to me, and about all that concerns you. Madame d'Escars is at Poitou with her daughter, the happy woman!

† Sister to Madam de Montespan, the King's mistress.

There is a man in this country, who writes a number of letters, and for fear that he should mistake the one for the other, he always takes care to direct the outside before he writes the letter. This whim diverted me mightily.



LETTER CCLXXXIV.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 27 October, 1675.

I HAVE had no Letters from you, my dear charming girl, which makes me very melancholy: it never enters into my head, that it is by any fault of your's; I impute it all to the confusion you are in at leaving Grignan. Madame de Chaulnes, and the little person, have been to Vitré to see the Princess of Tarente. The Dutchess immediately sent me her compliments, to let me know that she would wait upon me, upon which I went thither to dinner the next day. She received me with a great deal of joy, and entertained me two full hours with an account of their conduct for these six months past, how much she had suffered, and what terrible danger she had run: she knows that I have a pretty good correspondence, and might possibly have heard the things went in a different light. I thanked her very politely for the honour she did me, in this mark of her confidence. In short, the province has been greatly to blame: but it is as severely punished for it, and perhaps may never

never be able to recover itself again. There are five thousand troops at Rennes. One half of which are to pass the winter there, which will be long enough to get *young ones* †, as the Marshal de Gramont said. Forbu, and Vius, are heartily tired of their employments ‡. This last sent me his compliments, and I fancy I shall see him here. They are to return in a fortnight, but their troops are to remain behind. There are twenty or thirty people apprehended already, and will be hanged. The parliament is removed, that is the finishing stroke: for without Rennes is not of so much consequence as Vitré. Madame de Tarente has saved us from the contributions: I will not say all that M. de Chaulnes has written to me, but were I governor of the province, I could not be more secure of the care he will take of *Sévigné*, which you know, lies just at the gates of Rennes. I went to lie at the *Tower* *, and by eight o'clock this morning, I had the two good Princesses, and the Dutchess, at my levée. M. de St. Malo was with us at Vitré, he is Almoner to Madame de Chaulnes.

I was perfectly rejoiced to get back hither: I am making a new walk of trees, which employs me a good deal, I pay my workmen in corn; and I find that nothing is better than to amuse one's self, and forget, if possible, the ills of this life, and the most useful reflections they occasion. Nor do my evenings, my dear, about which you are so much in pain, hang more heavy on my

† See Letter CCLXIII

‡ They were sent at the head of the soldiery to chastise the Province.

* The Tower of *Sévigné*, the old family seat.

hands:

hands: I am almost always writing, or reading, and midnight overtakes me before I know where I am. Our Abbé takes his leave of me at ten, and the other two hours that I am alone, are no more irksome to me than the rest. In the day, I am always in business with the Abbé, or else amongst my dear labourers, where I lend a helping hand to work at my most agreeable task. In short, my dear, life flies away so swiftly, and we are always drawing so near to our end, that I cannot conceive how people can make themselves so unhappy about worldly affairs. Here I have time sufficient for reflection, and it is my fault, and not that of the place, if I do not indulge it.

I have received a most admirable Letter from the Coadjutor, he complains extremely of your raillery, and begs me very earnestly to revenge him on you, assuring me, that if I abandon him, God will not. He has sent me his oration, which loses nothing by being in print; it is a finished piece; he has sent me likewise, the Letter you wrote him upon it, which is very pointed, and full of wit; and there are strokes in it that are admirably suited to him, than when no one better understands raillery. Well, he is fallen into good hands: I cannot sufficiently love him for sending me that Letter; it is of double value to me just now, that I have none from you myself: I had a great mind to have written you, the same thing as you have him, I mean about your Bishops; for you might have seen that I thought the same thing.

I wait to hear from you with great impatience: I am sensible of the vexation it gave you

you to be obliged to quit your Château, and the freedom and ease with which you lived there. The Ceremonial Code, is a book you are very little fond of studying. Adieu, my love, I am wholly your's, and embrace you from the bottom of my heart. If M. de Grignan has time to come for it, I will give him an embrace too. The good behaviour and peaceable disposition of your Provence, have for ever given the lye to the rules of physionomy.

They tell me, that there is a great talk of peace: I wish it may turn out so, I fancy it would be better on all sides: we wished for war too: we are always uneasy, and shifting from one thing to another, in hopes of finding out something to please one at last.



L E T T E R CCLXXXV.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 30 October 1675.

GOOD God! my dear child, can any thing be more agreeable than your Letter from Aix? let me desire you to read your Letters over before you send them, that the pleasure you will have in the perusal, may make you amends for the trouble you are at in writing so much. So then you have kissed all Provence! there would be no great pleasure, I assure you, in kissing all Brittany, unless you loved the scent of wine. You have been very particular in the cares, caresses, and distinctions you bestowed

bestowed on the good Barones; you know in what light I always looked upon her; I should certainly have advised you to have made use of your glass with her. You make no mention of Roquesoute, nor of the good Cardinal †; I am so fond of our's at Commerci,* that for his sake, I love all red caps that are worthily worn; but do hold, and ever shall hold myself offended with all others: what you say on that subject, is quite just.

We have had M. de Marseille ‡ described to us here, armed cap a-pie, with his sword in his hand, by the side of the King of Poland, having had two horses killed under him, and pursuing the Tartar, as Archbishop Turpin did the Saracens: in his present situation, I fancy he would most sovereignly despise the little assembly at Lanefese. Will you have some news from Rennes? there is a tax of 100,000 crowns laid upon the citizens, which if they do not raise among themselves within four and twenty hours, it is to be doubled, and then raised by military execution. The inhabitants of one whole large street, have been all turned out of their houses, and banished; with express orders, that no one shall presume to entertain them in their houses, under pain of death. So that you might see these poor wretches, men, women, and children; old, and young; some of the women in their lying inn; all wandering about the out-skirts of the town, without a morsel to eat, or a bed to lie upon. The day before yesterday, a musician was broke upon the wheel, and his quarters stuck up in four

† Cardinal Grimaldi, Archbishop of Aix.

* Cardinal de Retz, who had retired to Commerci.

‡ Who was then ambassador in Poland.

different parts of the town, like those of *Jossoran* † at Aix ; for having been the first that set on foot plundering the stamp-office. At his death, he declared that it was the farmers of the stamp revenue that had set him on to stir up the rest, and that they had given him twenty five crowns for the same purpose, and he persisted in this to the last, nor could they get any other thing out of him. Sixty of the citizens are already in custody, and to-morrow the execution is to begin. This province has set a fine example for others, especially to be careful to pay a proper respect to their governors, and governesses, and not presume to throw stones into their garden. I told you how Madame de Tarente had protected us all here. She was with me here yesterday in my woods, it was most delightful weather ; she has laid aside all ceremony now, and comes and goes like one of the family. She was shewing me Letters from Denmark. The favourite has all the Princesses Letters brought, as it were by mistake, to the army, that he may have a pretext to inclose them to her, with a line or two from himself in favour of his passion.

But to return to Brittany ; every village is to furnish it's quota towards maintaining the soldiers ; how we give our provisions to save our bread, formerly we used to carry them to market, and get money for them, but that fashion is entirely changed. M. de Molac is returned to Nantes ; M. de Lavardin comes to Rennes. Every body pities poor M. d'Harouïs ; † we cannot conceive how he

† A Villain who had murdered his master, a gentleman of Provence, of the family of Pontevéz.

† Treasurer-general of the states of Brittany.

will manage, nor what demands will be made upon the state, supposing they should be assembled: in short, you may now reckon that there is no longer such a province as Brittany. It is a pity they do messieurs de Forbin, and de Vins, the honour to say, that they are heartily weary of being here, and grow very impatient to be gone. I think I told you of the pretty match between Madame de Noirmoutier, and the brother of d'Olonne. Adieu, my dear.



L E T T E R CCLXXXVI.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 3 November 1675.

I AM greatly taken up with your affairs in Provence, my dear, and if you take an interest in those of Denmark, I take a much greater in what passes at Lambesc. I wait for the issue of the defence that is to be made in parliament, to be sent to the Tower-house: I wait for the nomination of a procurator of the province, and the success of the journey of your consul, who would fain be a noble by the King's order. I have been highly diverted with your first president, and the effects of his jealousy; and cannot help thinking that they did him great injustice to suppose, that a person brought up at Paris, should not know better how to behave himself; and would not sooner give a brace or two of boxes on the ear, rather than strokes with the flat of a sword: though I am surprized how

how he could be jealous of the young lad that smelt so of tobacco : but there is no figure that is not formidable in some eyes. I am thinking, that our wine-smelling Bretons would be very good matches for your tobacco-scented Provençals.

I am surprized how any one can make a speech in public without faltering, or missing some part, when the eyes of a whole assembly are upon him, and a profound silence observed while he is speaking. This is for you Mr. le Comte : I am heartily rejoiced to find you possess an assurance so much superior to any thing I could ever pretend : but after all, my dear child, it is so much time lost to speak so long, and so well, when there is no-body to hear. I am as angry as you can be, that neither the Bishop, nor the Intendant were present at the opening of the assembly. I think there cannot be worse behaviour, nor a greater affront put upon the King; and him who has the honour to represent him. If they wait till M. de Marseille returns from his embassy, they may wait a long time ; for there is no great likelihood of his making one amongst them. I have complained of it to d'Hacquelle, that is all I can do at this distance.

A few days ago I had M. Boucherat here, and M. de Harlai his son-in-law, they dined with me. They are going to our states, which are to be opened when every one is assembled, they repeated the speech to me, it is a very pretty one: the presence of M. de Boucherat will be very advantageous for this Province, and likewise for M. d'Harouïs. M. and Madame de Chaulnes, are no longer at Rennes : the punishments begin to remit a little

little, and they have done hanging, for want of people to hang: there are but two thousand soldiers remaining at Rennes. I fancy Forbin and Vins will return by way of Nantes: Molac is gone already. It was M. de Pomponne who protected that poor wretch that I was telling you about. If you will send me the romance of your first President, I will in return, send you the lamentable ditty of the poor Fidler, who was broke on the wheel at Rennes. M. Boucherat drinks to your health; he is a very agreeable and sensible man: he came through Veret. At Blois he saw Madame de Maintenon, and the Duc de Maine, who are in their progress: every thing seems very joyful and gay. Madame Montespan went to meet that sweet Prince, and with her the Abbess de Fontevraud, and Madame de Thianges. I am in hopes that this agreeable jaunt will contribute to reconcile these two friends again.

Adieu, my ever dear child, I shall be delighted as well as you, when we can get to the Macchabees, but that does not seem to go on very well, I hope your reading goes on better; it would be a stain that you could never wash out, were you to leave Josephus * before you had finished him: alas! did you but know what I am finishing! and how much I suffer from the Jesuit †, you would pity me; but you are truly happy to have so charming a book ‡ to finish.

* Author of the Jewish antiquities.

† Maimbourg.

‡ The History of the Jews, translated by Mr. Arnauld d'Andilly.



L E T T E R CCLXXXVII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 6 Novem. 1675.

WHAT a delightful Letter have you written to me, my dear ! what thanks do I not owe you, for employing your hand, your eyes, your head, your time, in composing so agreeable a volume ! I have read it over and over, and shall as often repeat it with fresh pleasure and attention. I can read nothing that is more engaging ; you satisfy my curiosity in every article I can desire ; I admire your care in giving me such punctual answers. This makes a conversation perfect, regular, and extremely entertaining. But I must beg you not to destroy yourself ; this fear makes me renounce the pleasure of having frequently such entertainments ; you cannot doubt but there is the utmost generosity in the care I take to spare you the fatigue of immoderate writing.

I comprehend with pleasure the high esteem that is paid to Mr. de Grignan in Provence, after what I have seen of it. This is a pleasure you are scarce sensible of ; you are too much accustomed to be loved and honoured in a province where you command. If you saw the horror, the detestation, the hatred, that the people have in other places for their governors, you would taste the pleasure of being adored every where. What affronts ! what injuries !

juries ! what menaces ! what reproaches ! the very stones are ready to fly about their ears. I do not believe Mr. de Grignan would accept of this post upon such conditions.

You mention to me the paper you have signed in favour of Mr. de Grignan in such an heroic manner. You say you had no doubt which way the honourable sentiments of the Cardinal de Retz inclined : I do not say any thing of mine : it was enough that you could discern what his councils tended to. In certain delicate affairs, we do not presume directly to advise, but we represent the case ; the common friends of both do what is proper for them, that there may be no opposition between the interests of those they love : but if one has a soul so perfectly generous and good as yours, one consults only one's self, and acts precisely as you have done. Have you not seen how much you have been admired ? Are you not pleased that you owe to none but yourself so noble a resolution ? You would have done nothing blameable, if you had refused to sign, you would only have acted like the rest of the world ; but by consenting to it, you have exceeded all the world. In a word, my dear, enjoy the beauty of your own action, and do not think meanly of us for not having prompted you to it : on a like occasion, we should perhaps have acted as you have done, and you would have advised as we did ; all this has passed in the best manner. I am very much pleased that Mr. de Grignan is so good as to recompense this mark of your friendship and affection by a greater attention to his affairs : the prudence you commend him for, is the truest mark of his gratitude you could have wished. My dear Count, I am ravished to hear my daughter is so

perfectly satisfied with your conduct; I doubt not but you will think it right for you to persevere in it. You cannot fail of this, without appearing ungrateful to her, and injurious to the noble blood of the Ademars. I have met with one of your race, in the history of the Croisades, who was a very illustrious person about six hundred years ago. He was beloved as you are, and he would never have given a moment's inquietude to a wife like yours. His death was lamented by an army of three hundred thousand men, and mourned by all the Princes in Christendom. Not many pages after, I find a Governor of a castle, not altogether so ancient: he is indeed a mere modern; it was but five hundred and twenty years since he made a great figure. I conjure you, therefore, by these two of your noble ancestors, who are your particular friends, to give yourself up to the conduct of Madame de Grignan for the care of your œconomy; and consider how much you will consult your own advantage in doing so. You see, my dear, that without designing it, or thinking of it, I have written a long Letter to Mr. de Grignan.

Your conference with the intendant on account of those two families, who make so great a noise, is very pleasant; I love to attack on all occasions like this, certain persons who are thought so considerable that we dare not approach them. We need only take courage; their menaces are like the false fires of the magician in Tasso. In my opinion, lying so openly in a known matter of fact as this is, is tendering false money like Pomenard.

If I should write from this time till to-morrow, I should not be able to tell you, to how great

Great a degree your episode of Messina has diverted me. This piece is an original: the Prince and the Minister are both of them admirable characters. But ——— what is then become of the valour he boasted of in his youth? He appears to me at present like the Count de Culana in the * *Secchia rapita*: he does not ill resemble the figure of Sleep in Ariosto, or that of Indolence, as it is painted by Despreaux in the *Lutrin*: but it is not possible for him to remain long in this state. I shall preserve very carefully the picture of him, which you have given me: it could not have been more excellently done by Mignard.

I should be very glad to hear that the marriage of our daughter was like to be effected. If you have no body more intimate with Mr. de Montausier, employ d'Hacqueville in it. If he is to be killed by us, we had as good kill him outright. I had designed to have spared him a little; but I have fallen on him afresh, and I do him more mischief than all the rest of his friends. Let me advise you to deal with him like me; he is an inexhaustible friend.

Mr. de Coulanges tells me he has seen the beautiful Rochebonne, as it were enchanted, in the most melancholy castle in all France: I very much pity her. Why cannot she go to Lyons? Madame de Verneuil was there in November;

* A mock-heroic Poem in Italian, which is thought to have given the first hint to the *Lutrin* or *Boileau*, and to have occasioned those two entertaining pieces, *The Dispensary*, and *The Rape of the Lock*.

there were with her Madame de Coulanges and the Cardinal de Bonzi.

I am glad you like the history of Josephus, and are so well entertained with the adventure of Herod and Aristobulus. I beg you to go on, and see the end of the siege of Jerusalem, and the fate of Josaphat. Take courage; every thing is beautiful in this historian, every thing is grand, every thing is magnificent, every thing is worthy of you; let not an idle fancy prevail with you to lay him aside. As for me, I am engaged in the history of France; that of the Croisades has occasioned my looking into it. This last history does not seem to me comparable to a single leaf of Josephus. Alas! with how great pleasure we weep for the misfortunes of Aristobulus and Mariamne.

My dear, why do you tell me that I shall finish the reading of the voluminous epistle you have sent me with yawning out this exclamation,

* *Ab que les grands parleurs sont par moi detestés!*

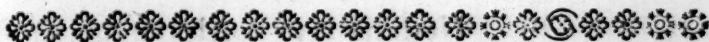
There are in your book, as you are pleased to term your Letter, a thousand entertaining histories and episodes; and I have spent two hours in writing mere nothings to you. I have, in a word, the rage of talking to myself out of breath, like the doctor in the Italian comedy. However, I conclude, and embrace you with extreme tenderness. I am extremely well, the evenings are long, and it rains: this is all I have to inform you of.

* How much I detest great talkers!

Mr.

MARCHIONESS DE SÉVIGNÉ. 127

Mr. de Tulles * has surpassed all that we expected from him, in his funeral oration on Mr. de Turenne: it is a piece worthy of immortality.



L E T T E R CCLXXXVIII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 10 Nov. 1675.

I AM vexed, my dear, that I have received none of your Letters by this post; and I perceive by this little vexation, how great a consolation it is to hear from a person we entirely love. This seems to bring us nearer; we are entertained with a thousand thoughts it presents to the mind; and though they are sometimes mingled with grief, yet even this is preferable to ignorance of what concerns our dearest friend.

We have a little summer in autumn, cold, but pleasant, which I like better than continual rains. I live always abroad, like a wild creature. The vivacity of my humour depends so much on the weather, that if you would know the temper of mind I am in, you need only consult the barometer. But I fear that in Provence this instrument of philosophy will only amuse you with representations of clouds and skies, little suitable to the climate I am condemned to. You are so accustomed to fine weather, that it scarce seems to

* Mr. Mascaron, bishop of Tulles.

engage your attention : while we, who seldom see the sun in his full lustre, are touched with a peculiar joy, when we feel his kindly influence. But—enough on the chapter, so frequently cited, of rain and sunshine.

Nothing is so much the subject of discourse at present, as Mr de Tulle's funeral oration; a performance not to be recited without being interrupted with perpetual cries of admiration. His text was: * *Domine, probasti me, & cognovisti me*, which he treated most divinely. I have a great desire to see it in print.

They say it is not true, that Mr. de Bailleul is selling his post. I am apt to think you will say of this, as you did of Mr. de Champlastreux's mouth, which was drawn up to his eye: is it not as well there as any where else? This, my dear, is what is called tatling; for you will easily comprehend, that I do not pretend to tell you news at a thousand leagues distance.



L E T T E R CCLXXXIX.

To the Same,

The Rocks, Wednesday, 13 Novem. 1675.

HERE they are both, my dear, and I imagine I should have received them in due time, had it not been for the post's stopping one

* O Lord, thou hast proved me, and known me.

day

day at Versailles. Whatever taste you may have for my Letters, they can never be that to you, that your's are to me; and since it has pleased heaven, that they are the only comfort that I have left, I think myself very happy in having such a liking to them; but indeed, my dear, it is very melancholy to see such a long continuance of them, without the hopes of enjoying the presence of one so dear to me, as is the writer: I can scarcely accustom myself to this hardship; all my thoughts, all my reflections are darkened by it, and it requires a courage that I have no pretence to, to put up with so extraordinary a disposition of fortune. These thoughts, my dear, frequently bring tears into my eyes, that I tell you nothing of what I should call your sermons upon me oftner than I would chuse, for believe me, I do not willingly give way to these melancholy meditations, but then they take possession of my heart sometimes without being able to resist them. I am very angry with myself, my dear, for not having been sufficiently mistress of myself to-day, not to give into this overflowing of tenderness. But let us call another subject.

You do not tell me, whether you have been well enough used in your assembly, to be quit for the usual gift: our's is increased; I thought I should have beat the honest body Boucherat when I saw this augmentation. I do not see how they can pretend to pay half of it. The states are to open to-morrow at Dinan. The parliament are all of them sick at Vannes. Rennes is like a desert, the punishments and taxes are unmerciful: I might write from this time till to-morrow, was I to repeat but half the horrid stories about it. La Marbeuf will return no more here; she has settled her affairs,

and is going to reside at Paris. I was thinking that Madame de Méri would do very well to hire a horse with her, she is a very reasonable woman, has a good coach, and what will make it still more convenient, there will be no occasion of being together but when they chuse it themselves : I know she will be glad of an opportunity to do me a pleasure, and be in a place where she can see me now and then : between this and Easter, Mademoiselle de Méri is to ask M. d'Effiat for an apartment. I have given La Tivetre a hint of all these things.

You are surpris'd that I have got a little dog ; I'll let you into this piece of history. One day I was calling and making much of a little dog that belongs to a lady, who lives at the end of my park ; Madam de Tarente seeing me take notice of the creature, told me, she would send me one of the prettiest things of the kind that ever was seen ; I thanked her, but told her, that I had made a resolution never more to indulge myself in a folly of that kind : so the thing was dropt, and I thought no more of it. In a day or two after, I saw a footman bringing a little dog-house in his arms, and out of this house jumps a little dog all perfumed, excessively handsome, fine large ears with silk ribbands in them, a breath as sweet as a rose, and a coat white as snow. I never was more surpris'd in my life ; I would have return'd it, but the man would by no means carry it back : the poor chamber-maid who had brought it up, was, it seems, ready to die with grief for the loss of it. The little creature is very fond of *Maria* ; he sleeps in his little house, or in Beaulieu's room, and eats nothing but bread. I do not give way to my fondness for it, but it begins to love me, and make much of me, and I am afraid of

of yielding at last. So this is the whole of the history of the little dog, which I desire you will not acquaint *Marphise* * with, for I dread her reproaches: but it is the cleanliest pretty thing you ever saw; its name is *Fidele*, a name which I am afraid the lovers of the Princess were never deserving of: though they have been of some consequence too: I will amuse you one day or another with the relation of her adventures. I am surprised that people can suffer the least appearance about them of aiming at what is already fled beyond their reach, and yet this the good Princess does to the no small affront of her glass, which is every day telling her that with such a face as her's she ought to lose even the remembrance of what she may have been. As for my part, I have long since perceived that the great fishes eat up the small ones; if I live again in you, as you tell me I do, I am but too much indebted to you, and cannot surely sufficiently indulge the love I have for you.

Our latter summer continues still, and I make very long walks: as I am not acquainted with the use of an elbow chair, I repose *ma corporee salma* all the length of my walks, and there I pass whole days attended by only one footman, and do not return till the night is well shut in, and the fire and tapers make the room chearful: I cannot bear this time of the year, when the evenings are neither long nor short, unless I have somebody to talk with; and I am better pleased with being alone in the woods, than alone in a room. This is like running up to one's neck in the water to save one's self from the rain, but any thing rather than an armed chair. In short, be under no appre-

* A favourite dog of Madame de Sévigné.

hension about me, my dear, the dews can do me no harm, and I seek the gloom as being good for my eyes.

Let me thank you for the liking you express to *Josephus*, is it not the most beautiful history in the world? I send you by Ripert the third part of the *Moral Essays*, which I think admirable; you will say it is the second, but the second is *on the education of a Prince*, and this is the third. There is likewise a treatise *on Self-Knowledge* which will please you, and another *on the use that may be made of bad sermons*; which latter would have been of great service to you last All-Saints day. You do very well, my dear child, not to forget your Italian. I do the same as you, read a little now and then by way of practice. What you say relating to M. de Chaulnes is admirable. Yesterday there was a man broke alive upon the wheel (this is the tenth) at Rennes; having confessed a design to assassinate the governor: this fellow was really deserving of death. The physicians of this country are not so complaisant as those of Provence, who allowed M. de Grignan to have the fever; our's here make no account of the purple fever, that M. de Chaulnes is really ill with, nor cannot be prevailed upon to declare him in any danger. When the parliament was banished, it was proposed, that they should purchase their return, by consenting to have a citadel built at Rennes, but that illustrious assembly bravely refused the offer, made a merit of obeying his Majesty's commands instantly, and withdrew themselves with more precipitation than was wished for; for had they staid, the time would have been wasted in fruitless negociations, and they looked upon the remedy as worse than the disease.

I wish

I wish that while I am absent, M. de Coulanges would furnish you with such things as are worth knowing. Mademoiselle de Noirmourier is to take the name of de Rohan, that of d'Olonne is too hard to purify, as you say very well. Adieu, my dearest child, you are then fully persuaded that I love you beyond the common love of mothers; indeed you are in the right of it, you are the darling occupation of my heart, and I faithfully promise you, I will never have any other, even though I should in my walks stumble upon a fountain of youth. Adieu, my dearest Countess, let me know how you sleep, whether you fall away, whether you have the tooth-ach, whether—— Good God! that I could but see you and embrace you!



LETTER CCXC.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 17 Novem. 1675.

I LEAVE you to answer, child, for all the fine things you have said of me; you have drawn a most flattering picture of me to the Intendant: it is certainly much beyond what I deserve, and yet I must own I had rather have your esteem and approbation than that of all the world. For my part, I think one does not trouble one's self much about the esteem or love of any but those one esteems and loves; and it is a mortifying reflection,

to think one is not in that rank : from all this I leave you to judge of my sentiments concerning what you have said of me.

I told you that Madame de Vins had wrote me a very pretty Letter upon the jealousy she had conceived of Madame de Villars : you never saw such a little bundle of nettles ! I have answered her Letter, and shall write to her again shortly, for she is of so tender a disposition that I fear lest she should take a second appearance of forgetfulness too much to heart. As to her husband, it is being too favourable to him, to suppose that it was the orders from Poland that hindered him from coming here ; no, my dear, it was the order he receives always from his own natural bashfulness which makes him avoid the genteeler kind of company. He was a whole day at Laval, he went within three leagues of my house : all this may be vanity in me perhaps, it is nevertheless true. Consider how many reasons he had to call upon one. *Provence, Pomponne, Grignan* *.

Yesterday I was at the Princess's ; there I met a gentleman of this country, a very well made man, who had lost an arm in the affair of Altenheim ; I asked him a number of questions concerning the battle, and about the trouble and confusion which the army was thrown into by the death of M. de Turenne : a relation of this kind from a person who has been on the spot, is always curious : at length, but without knowing who I was, he fell upon the subject of the regiment of

* The Marquis de Vins, was a Provençal by birth : brother-in-law to Mr. de Pomponne, and a near relation of the Grignan family.

Grignan, and its colonel* and believe me nothing could be more delightful than the natural and unaffected praises he bestowed on that gallant young man; in short, it brought the tears into my eyes. During the heat of the fight, the Chevalier gave such proofs of his judgment and bravery as was worthy the highest admiration; this officer knew no end of praising him, nor I of hearing him praised. The merit of this brother-in-law of your's is really extraordinary, he is universally beloved; which is what I should not have readily imagined, considering a certain obstinacy and vanity that is in his temper; but we are deceived; he is the very soul of the army, as this poor invalid says, who by the way, is tormented with dreadful pains, every now and then, and in what part think you? why at the end of the fingers of that hand he has lost. I should be glad to be able to account for this extraordinary circumstance, but indeed, child, it is beyond my comprehension. If you can explain it to me, 'twill do me a great pleasure.

Here is news about our province for you. I have received a whole bundle of it from Lavardin, d'Harouïs, and Boucherat, who have informed me of every thing. M. de Harlai demanded a gift of three millions, a sum that is never given but when the King comes to Nantes: for my part, I thought he had only been in jest. But our states, like a parcel of madmen, immediately complied with it; and at the same time M. de Chaulnes proposed sending a députation to the King to assure his Majesty of the loyalty of this province, and the grateful sense it had of his good-

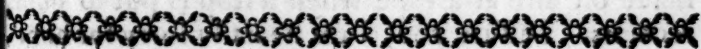
* The Chevalier de Grignan, brother-in-law to Mr. de Grignan,
ness

ness in sending down troops to restore the public tranquillity ; and that the nobility and gentry were in no wise concerned in the late disturbances. Immediately M. de St Malo was for booting himself as the deputy for the clergy, and Tonquedec for the noblesse ; but Mr. de Rohan, as president of the states, was going likewise, and another for to make up the third. They all went to Vitré, in their way, the day before yesterday : but it is an unheard-of thing, that the president of the noblesse ever took such a step. We have but one example of the kind in history, and that is of a Portuguese general, who left his army to the mercy of the enemy, to carry in person the news of a victory he had gained over the Castilian. We do not know what to think of this deputation, for my part, I look upon the thing as settled and concerted before hand, and that at it's return, it is to bring us back a remission of our taxes. I will let you know how it turns out, at present, we are all in the dark.

I think Madam de Guitaut has great reason to be contented with Joubert, for having delivered her so safely. The poor man had a wearisome time of it, but these sort of labours are what must raise his reputation. I do not think that her journey was in the least a prudent step, the event proved happy, but would never reconcile me to the like procedure : I shall never be easy on these occasions, since what I saw you suffer at Aix. Madame de Bethune has acted very differently from her sister, if she goes to Poland to lye in. She is going to enter upon a very agreeable station there ; your's seem at present a little tiresome to you for want of hearing *no* sometimes. You are surfeited with continual complaisance. You wish for a *Montausier*,
and

and I wish that the person you are questioning at present may not answer you *no*. This matter appears to me to be in an excellent light ; once more that *yes*, and then we will wait patiently for the *fower of negatives* ; *Bonzi* has very different views, they appear the same to Madame de Coulanges, as they do to me. Negatives are now chiefly made use of in part of payments, at least, they are so in this country, where we hear no other answer but *no* from those we ask our money of. Adieu, my dearest, I think of you night and day.

There is a person called the Chevalier de Sévigné at Toulon, who is a relation of your's, and my godson, the Chevalier de Buons tells me, he is very brave ; if he should call to pay his respects to M. de Grignan, I beg he will treat him with kindness for my sake, and do him any little friendship in his power. He would be glad to have a ship, as you can do any thing with Seignelai, you may easily get such a thing for him.



LETTER CCXCI.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 20 Novem. 1675.

I HAVE had no Letter from you, my dear, which has made me very dull. Du But tells me, it is occasioned by the badness of the weather ; which prevents the Provence post from coming in time enough for your packet to be put up in the

the Brittany bag. I don't believe a word of all this; I am afraid your cold is increased, and that you have got a fever, and will not suffer any one else to write to me, for fear of alarming me. Of this die are the thoughts that dwell here, my dear Countess; but I hope Friday will clear all up, and leave me in the cruel situation I am in at present from my disappointments, which has had such an effect on me, that I hardly know where I am.

We are in expectation of the return of Mr. de St Malo, and Mr. de Rohan. Though they are gone only to acquaint his Majesty with the loyalty of our intentions, for I fancy that will be all, yet I am persuaded that they will procure some indulgence for us. The states have already allowed them two thousand pistoles a-piece for their trouble and charges; in short, our humour for donations exceeds all the mad houses in the world. But in all this, I pity poor Monsieur d'Harouïs * who must certainly be ruined in having such large draughts made on him at a time when a stop is put to all his receipts. I assure you, I am heartily sorry for him.

Madame de Vins has wrote me another very pretty Letter; I am going to answer it, I would shew you what I write, if I had only to go from one room to another, but how is there any way to shew it you at such a horrible distance? I expect my son here soon; he will help me to pass my time much more agreeably while I remain here. The *Worthy* † informs you by me, that Rousseau

* Who was Treasurer of the States of Brittany.

† The Abbé de Coulanges.

is at Paris, and that you may write to him upon your affairs : when we get there, we shall be all employed hand and heart in serving you. You cannot make too much of d'Hacqueville, you have a great share in the correspondence I carry on with him. The good Cardinal has written to let me know that the winter draws near, I have desired him not to give himself uneasiness about any thing in his desert : it is not good, I tell him, to make one's self uneasy in a desert, and that I will take upon me to answer for every thing ; you find his Eminence has not forgot us yet. I am amusing myself with felling some great trees, the hurry and bustle of all this does not badly represent a winter-piece in tapestry ; on one side, you see trees falling, on the other people sawing the timber, here they are binding the brush wood into small bundles, there you see others loading a cart with the wood, and I in the midst of them all ; and so you have the picture complete.

Here is a billet for you from the Count de St Maurice, in which you will see news of the dutchess of Mazarine : he says, she is absolutely within six leagues of Paris ; the mad creature ! The King, besides the ten thousand crowns he has given to Madame de Fontevraud, has lately presented her with a diamond of a considerable value. I am very glad of it. I cannot write to the Coadjutor to-day ; and how will he, punctual as he is in those cases, be able to put up with this delay ? Pray do not be angry with him for having sent me your Letter, for it was a most excellent one ; there is nothing I so much delight in. But M. de la Garde, is he with you ? that is a man I truly esteem, and
who

who very truly deserves it. Adieu, my dear, I will chat a little longer with you another time.



LETTER CCXCII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 24 Novem. 1675.

A LITTLE patience would save a great deal of vexation. Time robs us of as much as it brings us; you know that we have always found it a mere shuffler, placing and displacing, ordering and disordering, imprinting and effacing, bringing together and separating, and in short, making all things good and bad, in such a manner that there is hardly knowing them again. Time shews respect to nothing but our friendship, and that it will always respect. But, my dear child, whether am I got? What a strange digression is this! I was only going to tell you, that the courier came in so late, that your Letters were kept back one post, and the next I had two together; and see what a round about piece of work I have made of it. Well, no matter! between friends one may be allowed to let the pen gallop a little at random. I am sure mine has generally the reins upon its neck.

They were greatly surpris'd at M. de Pomponne's, that the town house at Aix, which appeared to you like *a den of thieves*, should have served you so much to your satisfaction. I think it

is better it should be so for the sake of peace. But the question is, whether you would not divert us more by being engaged in war, where you always come off with the advantage: I know at least how you stand with respect to a general peace. I shall not write any thing to Paris concerning your war-like humour, lest M. de Pomponne, who is a lover of peace and concord, should be angry with you. D'Hacqueville assures me that we cannot wish to be better than we are with that family; if you are pleased with it, write to M. de Pomponne, and Madam de Vins; when one intends to do a kindness to a person, one always likes to know how it has succeeded.

The other day the Queen lost going to mass, and twenty thousand crowns besides in the forenoon. Upon which the King said to her, let us calculate, Madame, how much this is a year. And M. de Montausier asked her the next day, if she proposed missing mass for the *Hoca* again? upon which she was in a great passion. There are a set of people, child, that go to and fro from Versailles on purpose to pick up these stories to acquaint me with. I am quite in the dark at present about the mysterious present made by *Quanto* to M. de Marcellac. I like your parody extremely, it is both pretty and just. I sing it admirably well, but nobody hears me; don't you think there is something of madness or folly in singing by one's self in a wood. I am perfectly persuaded of the Bishop's * vows in the battle; *e fece voto, e fu liberato* †; but

* Of Marcellac, who was then ambassador to the King of Poland, whose dominions were invaded by the Turks.

† He made a vow and was delivered.

mark the end, *passato il periclo, schernito il santo* *. I take it he is very much disturbed about the colour of his hat; the Lord be praised he will not have our's †, it is too well fastened on a much worthier head. M. de Coffé hates the Pope, and I love him.

You are very pleasant upon our misfortunes; but we have no more breakings on the wheel now, except one a week or ten days, or so, just to keep the executioner's hand in: in short, hanging seems to be a kind of deliverance here from greater miseries. I have quite a different idea of justice and punishments, since my being here, to what I ever had; and I look upon your galley slaves as a set of very happy people, who have retired from the world to lead a life of ease and tranquility: we have sent you a few hundreds from hence, but those who are left behind, are much more wretched. I was telling you, that I was afraid they would put down our states, by way of punishment again, but they are assembled, and have made a gift of three millions, as if it was nothing at all: we are above thinking of the trifling circumstances of not being able to raise it; that is beneath our consideration. You ask me seriously if we are ruined here; if we had not a mind to leave the place: we might live here for nothing, for we can dispose of nothing, and we can buy nothing; in a word, there is not a farthing of money to be had in the province.

* *The danger passed, he threw aside the saint.*

† Meaning that of the Cardinal de Retz, for which the bishop of Marseilles and his friends had made great interest, when his Eminence had written to the Pope for leave to resign it. See Letter CCLXXIX.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCXCIII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 27 November, 1675.

WELL, my dear, it seems settled now that I am to receive two of your packets together, and miss one post; it is pleasant enough to see how I receive it in comparison with the manner in which I receive the others that come regular. I am of your opinion, my dear, and would give a deal of money to be as easy about answers to my letters as the Coadjutor is, and keep them in my pocket for a month or two without troubling my head about them. Well, it is a gift from heaven certainly, this happy indifference! Mad. de Langeron used to say concerning visits, and apply it to every thing; *What I do fatigues me, and what I do not gives me uneasiness.* I think this is very well said, and I feel it sensibly. I am always exact, however, in my answers; it is with pleasure I give you the choice of my budget; you have the very flower of my mind, my head, my eyes, my pen, my desk, and the rest goes as it will. I have as much amusement in chatting with you, as labour and fatigue in writing to others. I am perfectly stunned with the great news that abounds in Europe.

I imagine the Coadjutor has shewn
Mad. de Fontevraud the Letter which he received
from

from you: you are ignorant of the value of that Letter; you write like an angel; I read with the utmost admiration: you no sooner set out than you reach the goal. Do you remember the minuet which you danced so well, and closed in such excellent time, when the other creatures were not at the end of their's till the next day? The late MADAME and yourself were famous for this; we used to call it *gaining ground*. Well, just in that nature are your Letters.

As for your poor little brother, I know not where he has hid himself: it is three weeks now since I had a line from him. He made no mention of their pretty airing upon the Meuse, though every body believes it here, his fortune is really very hard, poor lad, I do not see how we can manage the affair of his promotion, unless Lauzun will take the guidonage in part of payment, with some other little additions, we will endeavour to raise: but to buy the ensign's place out and out, and have the guidonage left upon our hands is what will never do. Your reasoning upon the matter is very just, and what we all acquiesce in, and shall be very well contented to mount after the other two*, provided the Guidon serves as the first step.

I shall finish the year here very peaceable. There are times in which all places are indifferent, and that a solitude like this is not displeasing. Mad. de la Fayette returns you all your

* The Marquis de la Trouffe, and the Marquis de la Fare; the one Captain-Lieutenant, and the other Sub-Lieutenant, in the Dauphin's Gendarmes.

civilities: she has very bad health, and poor M. de Limoges still worse; he has resigned all his benefices to the king: I fancy his son, the Abbé de la Fayette, will have one of his abbeys. Poor Gascony has been as roughly handled as we have been. We have six thousand troops sent down to pass the winter amongst us: if it was not for the misbehaviour of the provinces, I do not know how they would be able to dispose of their troops. I cannot think the peace is so near. Ripert brings you a third volume of the *Moral Essays*, which are worthy your perusal. I never saw greater force and energy than there is in the stile of these writers: they make use of no words but what are in common use, and yet they appear perfectly new, by the elegant manner in which they dispose them. In the morning I read the history of France; in the afternoon, some serious subjects in my woods; and in the evening, some things of a grosser nature: this is my rule. I hope you continue to read *Josephus*; take courage, my dear, and go boldly on to the end. If you read the history of the Crusades, you will meet with two illustrious men who were your ancestors, but not a word about a certain great family that hold their heads so high at present: but I am persuaded that there are some passages which will make you throw aside the book, and curse the Jesuits; and yet upon the whole it is a very good history.

The good la Troche does her duty very well, for I look upon it as no obligation what is done for you: the Princess and I were rummaging the other day over some old papers of Mad. de la Tremoille's, where we found a thousand copies of verses, and an infinity of characters, among others, that which Mad. de la Fayette drew of me,

under the name of *Incognito* * : it is by far a too flattering likeness, notwithstanding some of my friends who knew me about sixteen years ago, out of their love for me would have it to be a strong resemblance: What answer can I make, what return, my dear, is equal to the tenderness you express for me; unless that of devoting myself entirely to you, and esteeming your love the dearest thing on earth to me?



LETTER CCXCIV.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 4 December, 1675.

THIS day I write upon a needle's point; for I now receive no Letters from you but on a Friday, and then I have two at a time. As I was returning from my walk yesterday, I met, at the end of the Mall, the poor *Frater* † who immediately clapt himself upon his two knees, conscious of being condemnable for having been three weeks under ground, without having once sung *matines*, that he thought he dared not to approach me otherwise. I had made a resolution to scold him heartily, but I was so glad to see him, that I could

* See the Preface to Vol. I. of these Letters.

† The Marquis de Sévigné, who was returned from the campaign. *Frater* is Latin for brother, and is a title given to a friar or priest, in which lies the play of the words.

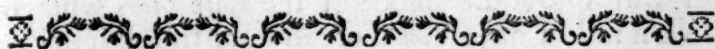
not,

not, for the life of me, find an angry word to make use of. You know how droll and diverting he is ; he embraced me a thousand times, and gave me the most sorry reasons in the world ; which however I received all as sterling. Now we are together, we chat, we read, we walk, and we wear away the year ; that is to say, what is left of it. We are determined to dispose of our plaguy Guidonage as well as we can, and the king will permit. M. de Lauzun may find a chap for his place, and we will endeavour to do the same for ours, and then we may perhaps agree together afterwards.

We are in doleful dumps about the troops that are pouring in upon us on all sides, under M. de Pommereüel. This has been a severe stroke on our officers, they are mortified in their turn, especially the governor, who did not expect such a sorry return for the present of three millions. M. de St. Malo is returned, he met with a very indifferent reception at the states : they complain greatly of the very bad bargain he has made at St. Germain. I think he ought, at least, to have remained at court, to see what he could do towards an abatement of these hardships. As for M. de Rohan, he is quite mad, and is not come back yet, nor perhaps does not intend to come back. M. de Coulanges writes me word that he saw him at Paris. I am now more vexed than ever at not having been there, that I might have the pleasure of seeing him. But do you know, my dear, that our regiment is one of those that are to be sent into this province ? It would be an odd circumstance if we should see the Chevalier here : I am sure I should receive him with the greatest joy. I fancy you will hardly

want for news from Paris, now the Chevalier is there. M. de Coulanges is greatly disgusted. M. le Jellier, it seems, has opened his purse-strings, and purchased for Bagnol the post of master of the requests, and at the same time given him another place which he had promised to M. de Coulanges, and which is worth, without stirring out of Paris, above one thousand livres a year : this is a sensible mortification for Coulanges ; and if Mad. de Coulanges cannot bring her uncle to another way of thinking, in a conference she is shortly to have with him on the subject, Coulanges is resolved to dispose of his place immediately : he has written to me about it, and seems very much nettled.

My dearest child, make some mention of yourself to me ! How do you do ? Is not your complexion ruined ? Are you handsome when you please ? I am for ever thinking of you, and you cannot oblige me more than by telling me every thing that relates to you. But I give up my pen to this honest lad that is at my elbow, and remain yours with all my heart.



LETTER CCXCV.

Monfieur DE SÉVIGNÉ,
To Madame DE GRIGNAN.

WHAT does the good lady mean by her honeſt lad? I am treated as if I was not fit to throw to the dogs, becauſe I was a fortnight in riding one hundred and fifty leagues of country; and ſuppoſe I ſtopt a little by the way, pray where is the great harm of it. They ſcold me; they are incenſed at me becauſe they cannot enjoy enough of the charms of my company; this it is to be too charming! Ah, my dear father, why did you get me ſo handſome?

I received your kind Letter, and the fixed and tender love you have always professed for me, makes me certain that you take as much interest in what concerns me as you ſay you do: my mother has informed you exactly how the affair ſtands. You may believe I ſhall hardly purchaſe M. de Lauzun's poſt of him, nor run myſelf into ruin for to have two very ſmall under places. This is the ſituation I am in by not abiding by your advice, in preference to any other; but really I think the crime may very well be expiated by ſeven years of purgatory, ſix of which are already paſſed under. M. de la Trouſſe does not deſerve an eternity of torment; and I have no other proſpect, unleſs ſpeedily

delivered by providence : however, for this once, I will follow the advice of the wise ones who govern us. I have heard of all your triumph in Provence, and it is impossible to say how sensibly they affected me. I embrace you most sincerely and tenderly my dear little sister. Consider in what a manner you have always behaved towards me : consider how much you have always preferred my interests to your own : consider how amiable and worthy you appear in the eyes of every one ; and then judge of my sentiments towards you.



L E T T E R CCXCVI.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 8 December. 1675

I AM very much out of humour to day, my dear, for I expected two of your packets by this last post, and I have received none. If the posts had came in tardy, as I believe at present, I ought to have received at least one ; for I count upon it that you never forget me. This confidence in you is just, and I am well assured that it is not displeasing to you : but as gloomy thoughts are apt to hover over these woods, I was inclined to be in pain for you. But since the Abbé assures me, that if any accident had happened to you, you would have ordered some person to write to me, I resolve not to entertain this fear ; it is too insupportable. I chuse to lay all the blame on the post, though I do not comprehend how it can be so excessively

sively irregular, and to hope now that I shall hear from you to-morrow : I wish it with all the impatience you can conceive.

Mr. d'Hacqueville has a cold and a little fever ; I am in pain about it, for I am always apprehensive of fevers ; they say they consummate, but it is life itself which receives its consummation from them. Whatever is said of d'Hacqueville, there is not one of the whole race who is comparable to our good friend. Has he not already mentioned to you an uncertain progress, which the King is to take in Champagne or Picardy ; since his favourites for our misfortune, have begun to spread abroad such a welcome piece of news ? They say it is to be for three months. You see I make the most of that loose sheet, which he writes under the notion of news. As for his Letter, it is so full of my son, and my daughter, and our affairs in Brittany, that I should be unnatural if I did not put out my eyes in decyphering it. Mr. de Lavaradin is my resident at the states ; he informs me of every thing. As we sometimes fill up our Letters with a sentence of Italian, I sent him these lines of Tasso, addressed by the shepherd to Erminia, to make him comprehend the repose and indolence I enjoy here :

† ——— *d'ogni oltraggio e scorno*
La mia famiglia e mia Gregge illese
Sempre qui fu ; ne Strepito di Marte
Turbò ancor questa remota parte.

† My little family and my flock have remained here unharmed by any hostile inroad ; no warlike alarm has yet disturbed this obscure retreat.

My Letter was scarce sent away, when there arrived at Vitré eight hundred dragoons, whom the Princess was very little pleased with. It is true, they are upon their march; but, upon my word, they live as if it were in a conquered country, notwithstanding our good marriage with Charles VIII. and with Louis XII. The deputies are returned from Paris. Mr. de St. Malo, who is your relation Guemadeve, and a mitred linnnet, as Madame de Choisy told me, appeared at the states perfectly transported, and full of the goodness of the King to him, and the particular regard that was shewed him, without having the least remorse for the ruin of the province, which was the agreeable present he brought with him. His manner of addressing the province, could not but be very agreeable to people who on their parts were in despair at the ill situation of their affairs. He said, that his Majesty was very well satisfied with his good province of Brittany, and with the present they had made him; that he had forgot what was past; and that he had sent his troops amongst them only as a mark of the confidence he placed in them, as one sends one's equipage home when one has no farther occasion for it. As for Mr. de Rohan, he behaved in a very different manner, and much more with the air of a good patriot.

This is the * scurvy news we have to send you; I desire to hear what you have to send us in return for it, and what is become of your *Procu-*

* *Chiennes de Nouvelles.* The reader may observe, in the accounts of these states, many strong paintings of the miseries of the people, under this arbitrary kind of government.

reur du Pais. You need not doubt but the Jansons have made great complaints to Mr. de Pomponne; I suppose you have not forgot to write to him too on your part, and likewise to Mad. de Vins, who undertook to write for St. Andiol. It is d'Hacqueville only who can serve you, and inform you of what concerns your affairs there. I am wholly useless to you * *in questa remota parte.* It is one of my greatest uneasinesses; if ever I find myself again in a condition to be serviceable to you, you shall see how I will redeem the time that has been lost. Adieu, my dear; I wish you perfect health; it is the only thing can preserve mine, which you have so great a concern for; it is in a very good state at present. I embrace you tenderly; and should tell you how agreeable and diverting my son is: but here he comes; I must not indulge his indolence, let him shew it in his own manner.

A LETTER of Mr. de Sévigné.

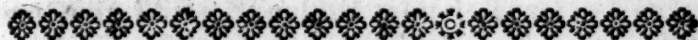
I SHOULD have nothing to entertain you with, my dear sister, after what I wrote to you three days since, if I had not spent the afternoon with Mademoiselle du Pleffis, who is still the same charming creature she always affected to be. This illustrious beauty, who is to be the subject of my Letter, has something so furiously agreeable, that she can only be equalled by the amiable Tisiphone. Her lip is covered with a kind of fret-work something resembling a leprosy; and her bright eyes have something in them so insufferable, that we wish for the defence of an umbrella even in

* In this distant retreat.

the shade. All her concern at present is, that this malady on her lip hinders her from kissing my mother every quarter of an hour. She has had something of the same kind upon her arm, which has kept her at home a long time: and I unluckily took the liberty to say, that the rocks was not the less agreeable for her absence. At present, we are in hopes that she will have a Tertian ague: she has been making her complaints of it to-day, which she renews every moment to engage our compassion. She has displayed all her eloquence in bemoaning herself, as under the dismal prospect of passing the whole winter in suffering a day of sickness for every two days she enjoys of health. By this means we expect to be attacked, as it were, by a double Tertian; and we foresee, very much to our dissatisfaction, that by being teized with her company, we are like to have two ill days for the one agreeable day on which she is confined.

In other respects, the rocks is extremely agreeable. My mother continues to signalize her goodness towards this favourite place, by still adding new beauties to it. Our good Abbé has spent the afternoon in drawing plans, which may remain as monuments of his taste, and of my mother's magnificence: the chapel is finished, and mass will be said in it in a week's time. My dear sister, may God long preserve to us so good a mother, and so good an uncle. I say nothing of my little post in the army: every thing goes so very ill, that I conceive new hopes from my disappointments. I embrace you a thousand times, and Mr. de Grignan, whom I perfectly love and honour. My mother has just been saying, that she has given no instructions to that jackanapes what to write; I was
willing

willing to hope she did not mean me, had she not said immediately after, son, make my compliments to Mr. de Grignan.



L E T T E R CCXCVII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 11 December, 1675.

A LITTLE Patience, my dear child, brings us to the end of all our desires: I have received the two packets of Letters from you that I should have received before, but here they are at last, and you will do me no more than justice to believe that I am highly delighted with having them. I thank you, my dear, that notwithstanding all your philosophy, you enter into my melancholy reflections on the immense distance that separates us; you sympathize with me; you seem afflicted, as well as myself, with this disposition of providence; but you encounter it with more courage than I, who always feel some new increase of sorrow from it. I am continually meditating on the past, which the present and the future can never make me amends for. I cannot but admire those good ladies who make a duty of their inclination; there is la Troche for instance, who has so well turned and wound her good fortune, that she is at length settled at her ease in the good city of Paris, as the seat of her empire, and the field of all her operations. She has fixed her son at court, in spite of wind and tide, and makes it her business to

be always near him. As for Marbeuf, she had begun, even in her husband's life time, and now lays no constraint upon herself: she has taken a lease of a house at Paris, for 100 years, and most humbly takes her leave of poor Brittany: whilst you, my dear girl, who was born and brought up in this country, you whom I have ever so fondly loved, and so ardently wished to have for ever with me, are driven to the farthest end of the world by the storms of adverse fortune; but, if I ever mean to put an end to my Letter, I must pass quickly over these reflections, and fortify myself in the flattering hope of a change: d'Hacqueville and I have some pleasing dreams of that kind; but this is not a time to communicate them to you. Let us return to the miseries of this poor province.

Every place is full of the warlike gentry; there are to be some at Vitre, notwithstanding the Princess is there. MONSIEUR, when he writes to her, styles her his good aunt; his dear aunt; but I do not find that she is a bit better treated than others. There are to be troops at Guerchi, which is the estate of the Marſchal de Villeroi; and from thence they are to spread themselves among the country people to rob and strip them. This is a heavy disaster upon poor Brittany, that never experienced any thing of the kind before. Our governor has received a power to grant a general amnesty, which he disperses with one hand, and lets loose with the other, eight thousand soldiers, whom he has as much command over as you have: they have all their orders. M. de Pommereuiel is expected here every day; he has the inspection of this little army, and may very soon boast of a fine government. He is the best and most sensible man of
any

any of the robe : he is greatly my friend ; but I much doubt whether he will be as tractable as your intendant, whom you manage so excellently ; I am afraid they should change him. I cannot satisfy your desire to day with any news from Languedoc ; but in the mean time content yourself with some from Guienne : I find that they are strongly protected, and have procured a considerable mitigation of their burthen. Alas ! we are not so happy, our protections, if we had any, would do us more hurt than good, by the animosity of two men. I believe we may still find, or at least promise to find, the three millions demanded of us without ruining our friend * ; for he is so beloved by the states, that they would do any thing rather than suffer him to be ruined. And this I think may suffice for this head.

I am rejoiced that you are not returned to Grignan ; it would have been only an additional fatigue and expence. Prudence and œconomy, for which the good Abbé desires me to thank you, have rendered that step needless. Let me know if the dear little ones are to come to you. We have most delightful weather here, and we are making some new walks, which will be very beautiful. My son is very good, and helps to amuse us ; he enters into the spirit of the place, and has brought no more of the warrior or the courtier with him into this retreat, than just what is necessary to enliven conversation. My Letter has not been given to Louvois ; the whole affair is negotiating between Lauzun and myself ; if he will take the Guidonage, we have offered to make a small addi-

* Mr. de Harouïs.

tion to it, but he resolves to sell his post outright, which would be out of all reason; he must look for a chap on his side, as we shall on ours; that is all. I have written to the Chevalier to condole him and myself on not having met together at Paris: we should have made curious lamentations together on our last year's party, and should have renewed our tears for the loss of M. de Turenne. I know not what idea you have of our Princess here. I assure you she is no *Artemisia* *; her heart is like wax, it easily takes impression, she makes a boast of it, and says pleasantly enough that she has a ridiculous heart; this is spoke in general terms, but the world is rather more particular in its applications. I am in hopes that I shall be able to keep this ridiculousness within bounds, by the hints I now and then throw in, and the frequent speeches I make (though as if I intended nothing by them) on the detestable point of light that we ought to look upon those women in, who give too great a loose to such a tenderness of disposition, and how much they subject themselves to the contempt of every one. I talk miraculously sometimes; I am heard, and approved, as much as can be expected. Indeed I look upon myself as obliged in conscience to talk in this manner, and should think it an honour to be instrumental in working a reformation.

What you say concerning *Fidèle* †, is extremely pretty and diverting. I must own that my behaviour has been quite that of the coquette,

* The loving and chaste wife of Mausolus, King of Caria, whose ashes she drank after his death.

† The little dog mentioned in a preceding Letter of the 13th of November.

and I am heartily ashamed of it. I endeavoured to justify myself in the manner I told you; for it is certain that I aspired to the supreme merit of loving only one dog, in contradiction to that maxim of M. de la Rochefoucault, *That it is more rare to find a woman who has had but one lover, than to find one that has had none at all*; but I am really embarrassed about *Marphite*; I do not know how to manage, nor what I shall say to her; this leads to lying; but, at all events, I will relate the circumstances of my new engagement: but, after all, it is an embarrassment to which I had resolved never to subject myself: thus it is one of many examples of the misfortunes of human life: this accident happened to me from my neighbourhood to Vitré.

I am tired to death with the barrenness of news; we stand in great need of some event, as you say, let it be at whose expence it will; as long as we have no more *Turennes* to lose. *Vogue la Galere*. You are greatly out in your notions concerning the behaviour of our governor here, when you say you should have done just as he did, had you been in his place: I know you would not; neither did the King's service require it. Ah! what is come of the excellent understanding you had last winter? This is no time to think of deputations, let us see peace restored, and then we shall have time to think of every thing.

As to the religion of the Jews, I said, when I was reading their history, that **if God*

* Agreeable to an expression of M. de Rochefoucault, who said, *That if God had been so good to him to permit him to be born a Turk, he would have died a Turk.*

had been so good to me to permit me to be born in it, I should have liked it better than any other, exclusive of the holiness of its institution and worship. I admire it for the magnificence: but you ought above all other, to have a great regard for it, on account of its year of rest and night-gowns, where you would have an opportunity of being a shining example of piety in your elbow chair, never would sabbath be better kept. Ripert has received the *Moral Essays*; they contain several treatises, and amongst the rest one that is particularly pleasing: you will guess which I mean. I am delighted with your good health and beauty, I love you in every thing. I often wish for you in these woods, the air of which, as well as that at Livri, greatly keeps the complexion. Our good Abbé gives you a great many commendations for your œconomy and care to discharge arrears; for that is *the whole of the law, and the prophets* with him; and as Mr. de Grignan is so very good and prudent, I will embrace him notwithstanding his beard, but do you know that your little brother's beard has the presumption to rival it, very pretty that! You tell us wonders about the marriage of the little Prince, and the Marechal; this disproportion is doubtless great, but do you know how he got over it? Believe me you have no need for my Letters to write by, you can write admirably well without a theme. But I must reduce myself at last to Solon's rule, *Nothing is to be praised on this side the grave*: which is a heavy restriction for me, who dearly love to praise what is praise-worthy, and then who can stay so long? For my part, I shall always go on my old way; adieu, my ever-lovely and beloved child.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCXCVIII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 15 December, 1675.

YOU astonish me, my dear child, in telling me that my Letters are so good, I am happy that they please you, you know my sentiments upon that head. I say nothing to you about your's, lest I should give you the fat Abbé's *pain in the calf of the leg*, otherwise I know what I could say, but I will shew you some of them, one of these days, and you shall judge yourself. You are much in the right when you suppose that I wish for nothing so much as to have an opportunity of being reconciled to Fontainbleau, but I cannot yet get rid of the remembrance of what it made me suffer. It seems then, that you have seen the Abbé de la Voigne, and have got the *Moral Essays*; those which I sent you, use much the same expedition as our Letters. The treatise on *tempting God*, seems to be the most useful; that on *the resemblance of self-love and charity* the brightest; to use their manner of expression. But let me have your opinion on them.

You have judged very rightly what it is that causes my indifference for our return to Paris; it is such, that were it not for the affairs which call us thither, I should see no reason to prefer one day to another for leaving this agreeable desert: but many reasons make us resolve to take our measures.

tures so, that we may arrive at Paris in the beginning of Lent; that is the best time for pleading, and I am a little like the Countess of Pimbéche; I hope every thing will go well.

Since you desire to know how the affair I have with Meneuf goes on, I must acquaint you, that he is in despair upon our serving upon him a certain instrument of justice, which leaves him no farther pretext not to finish the payment. He had counted upon a delay of paying five or six thousand francs, which is prevented by this paper. I am obliged to the Abbé for this discovery, for Vaillant had the paper in his hands, but did not know the virtue of it: but it is written in the book of fate, that I shall be under all kinds of obligations to him. I may now expect the conclusion of this affair. It is a pleasure to see the convulsions of his tricking temper, which is at a loss for a stratagem, and can find no new pretext.

I cannot imagine what Berbiff means; he tells me positively that he has sent you the sparrows; I will write to him again about it; I love to see with what expedition Mr. de Grignan devours them. In the mean time I embrace him, even though it should be the third day of his cruel thorny beard: it is, I think, impossible to expose one's person to danger with a better grace. I had resolved to treat the Chevalier in the same manner; but I am afraid we shall only have his regiment here. I designed to have told you, that if I could get him hither, I should devour him with caresses; but you have prevented me by telling me so: I own you have judged very rightly, that I should be extremely pleased to see him here. If we could be free from these

these excessive rains, I am well assured that he would not spend his time here disagreeably.

Tell me, my dear, of your luck at play, and of your health. I was not long in pain about your cold; it was not the post immediately after I heard of it, that failed. I have since received in eight days four packets, two at a time; there were none of your Letters lost; as for the irregularity of the post, it must be dispensed with. Do not let them know at Paris that I shall not return thither so soon: it is not that I apprehend there are any there who would hang themselves, if they knew of my delay; but because I would not give Mirepoix that pleasure.

Adieu, my dear, you cannot deceive yourself in believing that I entirely love you. Here is your brother coming, who will give you an account how I spend the fasting days, and how the first mass was celebrated to-day in our chapel; for though it has been built four years ago, it wanted all the ornaments necessary to make it fit to be used. Our Abbé loves you, and conjures you to be always employed in accounting, calculating, and computing, for that should be your principal care. What signifies it to have money, if one cannot tell what is due to one? Your farmers do their duty much better than ours: you pay off your arrears better than any person of the court; this is a great honour and credit to you. I am out of patience at hearing nothing more of the marriage of your daughter. Mad. d'Ormesson is marrying her son to a young widow; I will let you know, when it will be proper for you to make him your compliments upon it.

Our

Our states are broke up; we are short of the money we are to raise by nine hundred thousand francs: this gives me an uneasiness on account of Mr. d'Harouïs. They have retrenched half the pensions and gratifications. Mr. de Rohan did not dare, considering the dejected state of the province, to promote the least diversion: but that old mitred linnet of sixty, Mr. de Saint-Malo thought it becoming in him to begin; not, as you may perhaps expect, by appointing some solemn procession, or the prayers of forty hours, but by giving the ladies a ball and a supper. It was a public scandal: Mr. de Rohan, though he was ashamed of it, was forced to continue it. Thus, like the dying swan, we sing over our own ruin. My son will tell you, where he found this simile: I believe it was at the end of Quintus Curtius.

A Continuation of this Letter by Mr. de Séyigné.

My aunt de Biais furnished me with this erudition, but she did not furnish me with the account I am going to give you of what I did yesterday. You know, or at least you may have reason to think, that I do not spend all my time at the rocks; so that I am not unacquainted with the adventures that happen in this country. There came a great assembly of the clergy to assist at the ceremony of opening our chapel; Mr. du Pleffis was amongst them. I thought it proper to chuse for the subject of discourse something that concerned gentlemen of their profession; and I began with enquiring what was become of Monsieur de Ville-Brune. They told me, he was fled for refuge to Lower-Brittany, and that he had lost his benefice.

I re-

I replied, in my turn, that I always thought he would not keep it long, and that there would soon be found some cunning sharper, who would get it from him. I went on to enlarge upon this misbehaviour of Ville-Brune; I assured the company that the Capuchins had given me a strange character of him, and that indeed his life made all they said of him but too credible; for a brother who had profanely thrown off his Capuchin's frock, must certainly be a man of very ill principles. This fine discourse had two very good effects. The first was, that the Abbé du Plessis is the cunning sharper, who by a horrible ingratitude made poor Ville-Brune lose his benefice: and the second, that the rector of Breal, who performed the ceremony, had been himself a Capuchin; so that my words were a two edged sword to those two reverend gentlemen, like that mentioned in the apocalypse, which I had not the presumption to design to imitate.

Adieu, my dear sister, continue to love me, and obtain for me the same favour from Mr. de Grignan. Tell him that I love and honour him; and that, finding myself incapable of imitating him in his excellent qualities, I endeavour at least to make my beard resemble his, as far as is in my power; and that I should think myself too happy, if I could give it that glossy colour, which a raven might envy, and which makes him appear in your eyes and mine a perfect Adonis.

The charming la Plessis is still indisposed. This is the day in which we are to expect our fit; pity us, for her visit, which is worse than that of the ague, is like to be long, and may perhaps begin by ten in the morning. We have lately
had

had in her place a very pretty damsel, whose eyes do not at all resemble hers. By her means we have set on foot the game of *Reversi**, and instead of *Biguer*†, we pronounce it *Bigler*. I hope the pleasure of repeating this simple term in her presence, who is so much a critic, and so impatient of any impropriety of expression, will be no unpleasant revenge on her for her impertinence. She salutes you with her ruby lip. If you find any embarrass in the date of this Letter, it is because my mother writ her part of it yesterday in the evening after she came in from her mall, and I write this morning, before I go out to hunt squirrels there. To shew you the age and the capacity of the little lads we have with us, she assured us the other day, that the day after Easter-eve was a Tuesday. Observing us to smile, she corrected herself, and said it was a Monday; and finding this did not succeed, she cried out, Oh! what a simpleton am I! it is a Friday. You see what doubts and perplexities we labour under; if you will have the goodness to favour us with your opinion in this difficult point, you will extricate us out of a very great uncertainty.

* A Game so called.

† A term in the game.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCXCIX.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday. 18 Decem. 1675.

I HAVE just been writing to Mr. de Pomponne, and Madame de Vins, in pursuance to d'Hacqueville's advice. I fancy I have wrote in the proper strain; I always send my Letters open to him, who is terrified at seeing so many ready to fall upon us: he is afraid lest you should have neglected to send up the defence made by your friends: he finds the affair is come before the council, where M. de Colbert has a voice, as well as M. de Pomponne, and he was willing to be supported with my poor Letters, of which, he is to make what use he sees fit. It vexes me, that I am not upon the spot to attend to this affair myself, not that I imagine I could do better than d'Hacqueville, but then there would be two instead of one, and I should have the satisfaction of being of some little assistance to you; but Providence has not seen fit to indulge me with my desire. It is certain that d'Hacqueville will leave no stone unturned; for never was man more determined in the cause of a friend than himself: he is a treasure of goodness, friendship, and capacity, with an assiduity and exactness unknown to any one but himself. So that I wait in hopes of seeing this affair speedily and happily ended. Not but that I shall open the Letters I receive from him with some emotion, because I look upon myself as particularly

particularly interested in an affair of so much importance to you, and your province. I am at a curious distance to run my nose into these sort of affairs ! I wrote about three days since to the illustrious *Sapho**, and to Corbinelli ; but I have no fears from that quarter, it is a minister I fear.

I have passed a day at Vitré with Mr. de Pommerouiel, who told me before the Princess, that he had staid purely on my account. He talked mightily both at Malicorne and Laval, of the acquaintance he had with me, and how greatly he esteemed me : as for me, I said nothing about the matter, for I hate those people who pretend to know all the world ; it looks so presuming, that I cannot bear it. So, as I tell you, I was quite silent, till Mr. de Pommereuiel began, and then I did not contradict him ; we soon entered into a very long conversation ; we took Brittany to pieces, while the Princess was at prayers with her little flock ; he is received every where like a deity, and not without reason, for he is come to restore justice and good order, and to be a curb upon ten thousand men, who would otherwise eat us all up alive. His commission is to continue no longer than spring ; and he accepted of it purely to make his court, and not his fortune, for that goes in a different channel, he thinks of nothing but how to please every body. He will live very well with Mr. de Chaulnes, but he will make the most of every point he may give up for the sake of living quietly, for he is sensible that when one does not give things up in a simple manner, it is the best way not to make a stir about trifles, as it can only tend to the hindrance of the

* Madame de Coulanges.

service. He spoke to me of you, which gave me as much pleasure as if he had talked to me of myself.

I am perfectly surpris'd at what I am told about Madame de Maintenon; they say, she is no longer so much the object of general admiration as she was; that the proverb has been verified in her, and that my friend at Lyons seems less bewitched to her: the Lady of Honour * too, seems to cool a little upon it: all this gives room for reflections, serious and moral to my little friend: do not take any notice of all this. I would advise you to write a word or two by d'Hacqueville, by way of congratulation to Madame de la Fayette, on the abbey she has lately had given her. Adieu, my dearest child, methinks I do not love you much to-day; well! I will love you the more for it another time, so comfort yourself with that. Tell me a little of your opinion concerning the *Moral Essays*: is not that a charming book?



L E T T E R CCC.

To the Same.

Vitri, 22 December, 1675.

I A M come here, my dear, to see Madame de Chaulnes, and the little wench, and Mr. de Rohan, who are going to set out for Paris. Madame de Chaulnes had written to me to desire

* Madame de Richelieu,

that I would come hither to take my leave of her: she was to have been here yesterday, but her excuse was, that she was afraid of being robbed by the soldiers that are upon the road, and therefore M. de Rohan had desired her to stay till to day; but all this while fish and flesh suffer for it, for she has been expected ever since Thursday. I cannot say but I think it is acting rather too familiarly, after having wrote to me that she should positively come. The Princess herself thinks it not quite right, but after all, we must excuse people who are a little beside themselves: it is a thousand pities you could not have been witness to the mortification that has been put upon them here. There have been ten thousand men sent down without their knowing scarce any thing of the matter, and without their having any more power over them than you have. M. de Pommereüil is with the troops at Rennes; he is looked upon every where like a god, not but that every step he has taken, has been previously concerted in Paris; but then he keeps up the strictest discipline, and prevents his men from committing disorders; this you will allow is a great deal. Madame de Rohan, and Madame de Coëtquen have been greatly relieved since his being here. The Princess de Tarente is in hopes that *Monsieur* and *Madame* will procure her some relief too, and indeed it is much to be wished, for she has not a foot of land besides this, and it would be a very disagreeable circumstance to see all her tenants ruined before her face. We shall be safe if she is so. You see, my dear, here is a long article from Brittany, but we must have this subject, you may judge how this has affected the provinces.

I did not wait for a Letter from you, my dear, to write to M. de Pomponne, and to Madame de Vins. I took council of d'Hacqueville, and did my best. If I am not mistaken, we may look for something considerable from that quarter. Let me desire you not to check your pen when it is upon the subject of Provence. Consider those affairs are mine; in short, curb it in nothing, for it is an admirable one, and when it is at freedom, we may say of it, as of Ariosto's, that it charms where it leaves off, and where it begins: every subject you take up, makes amends for the loss of that you lay down. That passage about stepping off the Rock gently to please his holiness, is enough to make one die with laughing. But do not tell it to Mr. de Grignan, with his gravity; for my part, God forgive me, I cannot help finding something vastly pleasant in it; nothing can be wrote with more life and spirit. I think you are more sprightly in your Letters, than in your common conversation. My son makes me just mad with a foolish book that he is perpetually reading at my elbow, it is *Pharamond**: he takes me from my more serious reading, under a pretence, that I shall hurt my eyes, and obliges me to listen to a pack of stuff that I could wish to forget. He is very good, for he is always thinking of something to amuse me. He would have wrote to you to-day, but I do not think he will be able to do it, for we are not at home, and while I am here writing to you he is entertaining the Princess at Ombre, in her own chamber, who is always speaking of you with the greatest esteem and admiration.

* A Romance of la Calprenede's.

Was I in a place where I could give you my advice, my dear, it should be to lay aside the thoughts of going to Grignan. What end will such a journey answer? and then there is the Durance, and a bleak north wind: in short, what need is there for so much hurry and bustle? you are very well settled at Aix; why not pass your winter there? as for me, when I am in the country, I never think of cities, and if I was perfectly settled in a city, I should not bear the thoughts of the country. I talk a little at random, for want of properly knowing your reasons. What those of M. de Maillaenes may be for loving La Trouffe I cannot tell, but I hope they are good ones. These gentlemen honour us sometimes with their ill humours, but they are perfectly adored by strangers: I have heard much good spoken of Maillanes, and that the Prince should have mentioned him to the King, in the most favourable manner, and as a lad of great bravery. I was delighted when they told me this at Paris. Pray, my dear, let us see how far the Coadjutor's laziness will carry him: good God! how happy he is, and how much do I envy him that total indifference on every thing that passes in life! this is all the news I have about him.

I hear you have a band, my dear, I am persuaded it is a good one: you know I honour every thing that is music, but though I pretend to some skill in it, I am not to compare to M. de Grignan. Has Madame de Beaumont a great deal of wit? and Roquesante too? do they both fast upon bread and water? what need is there for all these penances, when he has brought so many plenary indul-

indulgencies with him. They do not certainly want any assistance or support. But let us say a word or two about Denmark. The Princess * is at the siege of Wismar, with the King and Queen, where the two lovers perform actions worthy a romance. The favourite has negotiated a marriage for the Prince, and left the lovely Princess to hear the news from common report, nay, he was two whole days without seeing her, this was not the action of a fool. I should not be surprised if it should at last appear, that he was son to some King of the Visigoths.

You frighten me, with telling me of your old Widow being about to marry a young fellow. It is very happy not to be too ready to entertain a good opinion of such folks at first, it is much better to wait a little, and remark their proceedings. You are surprised, you say, that the good folks about you cannot comprehend, why you should desire to be ever absent from them; and I on my side, cannot bear the reflection, that they should have the barbarity to wish me to pass my life at the Rocks always, without thinking of a return, or any society more delightful than that of Madame de Plessis: it is horribly vexatious to think that a whole province should have such an opinion of one, as to think that one has no acquaintance at Paris. But, my dear, by dint of selling, mortgaging, borrowing, and stirring about, we have made shift to raise our three millions. *Nous serons si fots que nous prendrons la Rochelle* †. This is an old saying, that

* Daughter to the Princess de Tarente.

† *We shall be mad enough to take Rochelle.*
of the great men, at the siege of Rochelle.

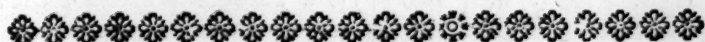
A vaunting speech

I would have you to apply. We have given the same gratifications as usual, nay, they have even saved M. d'Harouïs from the danger he was in. But they have treated M. de St. Malo so rudely, that his nephew found himself obliged to challenge a gentleman of Lower-Brittany. Adieu my dearest child, it is not one of the least obligations I have to you, that you enter so perfectly in the delight I take in your long Letters; and I hope you will always believe that they make the greatest joy and comfort of my life, and that I know no sorrow greater than that occasioned by a delay of the post.

Sunday.

I was obliged to leave off yesterday on the arrival of Madame de Chaulnes, M. de Rohan, and the little one, they supped here, and set out this morning for Laval, and from thence directly to Paris: if I am not mistaken, M. de Rohan seems very happy in being with the little one. Madame de Chaulnes gave me a long detail of matters at the states; I made her agree that M. de St. Malo had made himself ridiculous with his ball: she seems excessively mortified about the troops, as well as her husband, who remains at Rennes greatly embarrassed with the presence of Pommereüil. All this little party spoke much of you. When I am at the Rocks I will write you more at length. Indeed, my dear, my greatest comfort is thus conversing with you.

LETTER



L E T T E R C C C I.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Tuesday, Christmas-day, 1675.

THIS is the day, my dear girl, in which I have given my pen liberty to write what it pleases; it chuses to begin by the joy I feel at having left Vitré, and being returned hither in peace and repose, after two tedious days of talk, ceremony, and patiently hearing all the idle packets that are prepared for Paris; I had the satisfaction however to contradict some part of them, particularly about the ball which Mr. de St. Malo gave the states. Mad. de Tarante laughed heartily to see me so warm and full of my reasons for and against. But, in short, I had rather be in these woods in the manner that you know, than be at Vitré with the air of a fine lady. The good * Princess went to her religious assembly: I heard them all singing together in a very disagreeable manner †. I felt a sensible pleasure after it in hearing mass; I have not for a long time been so much pleased with being a good catholic. I dined with the minister: my son disputed like a demon. I went to Vespers in pure spirit of opposition: this has taught me a little to comprehend the sacred obstinacy of martyrdom.

* Madame de Tarante. She was a Protestant,

† Chanter les oreilles.

My son is gone to Rennes to see the governor. This * night we performed our devotions in our fine chapel. I have met with another little country lass, who is very pretty. Her house borders on my park. Her mother is a daughter of the good old woman Maralle, whom perhaps you may not remember. Her mother is gone to Rennes, and I have kept her with me. She plays at Trictrac and at Reverfis. She is agreeable enough, and has a natural life and cheerfulness in her behaviour. Her name is Janette; she incommodes me a little like Fidele. La Pleffis has an ague. It is a pleasant thing to see how angry and jealous she is when she comes and finds this girl here, and the strife there is between them to hold my cane or my muff. But enough of this: I have made a great article out of nothing.

The Forbins have an affair of great importance, that of little Janson, who has killed in a duel the nephew of Mr. de la Feüillade. This affair is before the parliament; and the King has said, that if justice had been done on the death of Chateau-Vilain, there would have been many more. So there is one young gentleman more, like so many others, obliged to leave France, and to reside in foreign countries. This has been the subject of much intrigue.

* There is a mass said on Christmas-eve at midnight, in commemoration of the appearance of the angels to the shepherds; and the churches are fantastically dressed up so, as to represent the stable in which our Lord was born, and the adorations there paid to him.

What

What is your opinion of poor Madame de Puisieux? her cold is turned into a fluxion upon her breast. This has been a frequent distemper here. Our relation Launois died of it in three days: he was of a temper peculiarly agreeable to me: I am very much afflicted at it. This good friend of ours la Puisieux might have done us a thousand services against Mirepoix, and she is dying.

The cardinal has trusted me with the secret of his being at Saint-Michael to pass the holy days; but he desires me to say nothing of it for fear of giving offence. It was impossible for me to forbear communicating to him all that article of Rome, in your last Letter. There is a wondrous harmony in the arrangement of every word of which it is composed: I am well assured he will think it inimitable, and that he will be sensibly touched with all the beauties of the stile and sentiments of his dear niece.

Madame de Coulanges has had a long conversation with her fat * cousin, which she hopes will be very much to the advantage of M. de Coulanges. Has not the great lady written to you? Madame de Vins has just writ me a very pleasant Letter, and as you say, fuller of flattery than herself. She tells me, there is no other way to prevent desiring my friendship, but never to have seen me. The whole Letter is in the same strain: it is a fagot of feathers, instead of a fagot of thorns. Mr. de Hacqueville believes she will be very much

* Mr. de Louvois,

in our interest; though she has been a little angry, that what she desired has taken a different turn.

Do you know la Boulai? yes, I believe you do. He met by accident with Madame de Courcelles; to see her and to adore her was the same thing; a fancy took them to go to Geneva, where they are at present, and from whence he has writ to Manicamp the pleasantest Letter in the world.

Madame de Mazarin, for her part, is rambling about the wide world: it is thought she is in England, where you know there is neither faith, nor law, nor priest; but I believe it is not true, as it is said in the song, that she is for driving out the King too from thence.

Is it not abusing your leisure to entertain you with such fooleries as these? I say such as these, because there are fooleries of different kinds. Those which answer to yours, are of the agreeable kind, and are always welcome to such as have a true taste; but mere impertinencies, though ridiculous, are not diverting. I conclude with wishing you much mirth this festival season, and with assuring you, that I love you with a perfect tenderness, which will doubtless accompany me * *in articulo mortis*.

Did I tell you, that Madame de Fontenauux made a visit to Madame de Coulanges, purely to see your picture? No pilgrimage was ever undertaken in honour of a lover saint.

* In the last agonies of death.



LETTER CCCII.

To the Same,

The Rocks, Saturday, 29 Decem. 1675.

MY dear little Letters are come at last: do not think I am to be pitied for enduring the fatigue of reading two at a time; you better know my fondness of them. Whenever I receive one, I always wish for another, and here it is. It is a double joy, a hoard of happiness, as long as I am not in pain for you. Nothing can make a better compensation for the disappointment occasioned by the irregularities of the post, which I so much resent; but I never am guilty of the least suspicion of your failing to write to me. Would not Mongobert acquaint me with it, if any thing should happen to prevent you? pray let me know how she does: I love and embrace her. I return to the post: it is the winter which causes these irregularities. It must be confessed, that your Letters deserve well to be expected, and received. I have received Letters from Madame de Vins, from Mr. de Pomponne, and Corbinelli. I have clenched the nail, with regard to Corbinelli and his muse, by declaring, that I will put upon the same foot what I demand of him, and what she demands of me. You will see that Madame de Vins has still at heart what she writ to you about: since she gives you so fair an opportunity to justify yourself, do it, my dear, and tell your pretty little reasons, that they

may be heard, and that none may any longer think you to blame. Mr. de Pomponne has scarce forgiven me yet, for saying in Madame de Vin's Letter, that he loved the bishop of Marseilles better than he did me. In a word, all our friends of that clan are very kind and hearty; and Mr. d'Hacqueville tells me, that we have all the reason in the world to be satisfied with them. All your reasons have been presented, and every thing has been done in the manner you directed; he fears only Mr. Colbert. For my part, I believe this affair will be referred to the intendant, and that is what you desire. I believe it would be better, if things were ordered to continue as they are: but alas! in this world, where we do what we can (and this holds true with regard to you as well as to us) do we do the half, (God preserve us from it) or even the quarter of what we would?

We have been made to expect the departure of *Figuriborum*: I do not say the peace; for you will never believe that a treaty can be signed by him. How pleasant you are in recollecting a time so different from the present? could we have ever thought, that *Figuriborum* would have made a figure? never was any man ridiculed as he has been. It must be owned, that you have the most extraordinary address in rallying, of any person in the world. Here is a little awkward figure of a man, who has had the vanity to boast, that he had escaped from your pleasantries; and you are desirous of letting him see that he is still as much in your power as ever: but seriously, are not you afraid of being excommunicated?

What

What say you to the marriage of la Motte? is there any necessity of beauty, youth, or conduct, to procure a settlement for a young woman? the goodness of Providence! we can only have recourse to that.

Madame de Puisieux is raised to life again: but is it not dying twice within a very little time? for she is fourscore.

Madame de Coulanges tells me all the good company we have in our quarter; but this does not engage me to return thither sooner than I had designed: I am only drawn thither by affairs; for as for pleasures, I hope for none. The winter is not here what it is imagined to be; it gives me no horror. We follow your advice as to my son; we consent to make a few false appearances; and if we are refused, we shall be but even with the ladies, who cannot complain, unless dissimulation be their peculiar privilege. In the mean time, while he expects the success of this amour, he is very agreeable company to me here, and finds me not less so to him; there is not the least air of maternity in our manner of conversing. The Princess is surpris'd at it; she who has only a booby of a son, who has not the least spark of a soul in his body. She is very much aggrieved by the troops, which are arriv'd at Vitré; she hoped with reason to be exempted from them; but notwithstanding that she has a good regiment in her town. It had been a pleasant thing, if it had been the regiment of Grignan.

Do not you intend to read the *Essays on Morality*, and give me your opinion of them ? for my part, I am charmed with them. I am very much so with the funeral oration of M. de Turenne ; there are passages in it, which ought to have made all that assisted at it weep. I do not doubt but it has been sent you ; tell me, if you do not think it very fine. Have you no thoughts of finishing the history of Josephus ? We read much, as well things of a serious kind, as pieces of levity ; are equally entertained with fable, and with history. We are so deeply engaged in these amusements, that we have scarce leisure for any thing besides. They pity us at Paris ; they think us confined to a fire side by the inclemency of the season, and languishing under a famine of diversions. Alas ! my dear, I walk abroad ; I find a thousand amusements ; the woods have nothing wild or inhospitable. It is not for passing my time here rather than at Paris, that I am to be lamented.

Mr. de Coulanges has great hopes, from a conversation his wife had with Mr. de Louvois. If they had the intendency of Lyons, as their father-in-law had, it would be an excellent thing. It is pleasant to see the world ! all of them firmly believing there is no happiness out of Paris, and yet labouring to establish themselves at a hundred leagues distance from it. I cannot comprehend the new passion of the *Charmer* ; it is not to be imagined that he can find more than one subject of conversation to entertain a mistress of so low a taste ; as Madame de ——— said very well. They say her husband has forbid her any other company but that of Madame de Armagnac. This strikes my
ima-

imagination in the same manner as I am apt to think it will yours, my dear; I fancy I see this ancient Medea armed with her wand, and dispersing at her pleasure all those airy phantoms, the gallants. They say that Mr. de la Trouffe has formed a design upon la Maison; but I do not know whether he has obtained his liberty. I should sing the reverse of the song of the last year:

* *La Trouffe est vainqueur de Brancas,
Têtu ne lui résiste pas,
De lui seul Coulanges est content,
Que chacun chante.*

But I sing this only between you and me, my dear, I know that in other company I must change my tone; you are trusty and discreet.

The length of our answers gives us terrible apprehensions; it makes us comprehend the vast distance there is between us. Alas! my dear, how sensible I am of it; and how much melancholy does it give me! were it not for this, should I not be too happy in having such a son with me? he will tell you himself, how unhappy he is in being at such a distance from you. Adieu my dearest. Write to me of your health and your beauty, every thing of this kind delights me. I have my health as well as you can desire. I expected your brother, but he is not returned. He is but a tender creature yet. If he should marry, while he is upon this little expedition! but I am well assured they

* La Trouffe has conquered Brancas; Têtu is not able to resist him; Coulanges is satisfied with him alone. Let every one sing his victories.

detain

detain him upon no serious design; if he diverts himself there, it is well. Adieu, my dearest. Does Mr. de Grignan salute me?



LETTER CCCIII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Tuesday, New-Year's-Day, 1676.

WE have now begun the next year, as Mr. de Monbafon said. I wish it may prove happy to you; and if you believe the continuance of my amity can make any part of that happiness, you may safely reckon upon it.

I have here a Letter from Mr. d'Hacqueville, which will inform you of the agreeable success of our affairs in Provence. It much exceeds my hopes; the utmost extent of which you will see by the Letters I received a few days since, which I will send you. This thorn is now happily taken out of your foot; this den of thieves is demolished; the credit of this cabal is vanished. But let me advise you to use your victory with moderation: consider as our friend d'Hacqueville says, that prudence and generosity oblige you to it.

You will see how I betray his secret to you, for the pleasure of shewing you the inside of the cards, which he designs to conceal even from yourself. But I cannot consent to leave you under any doubt of the sentiments you ought to entertain

certain for this generous friend, and for his sister-in-law : for it appears to me, that they have even done beyond what they have written to me ; and as the utmost recompence, they desire no acknowledgment. Treat them therefore in their own way, and enjoy in silence their true and solid friendship. Take care not to let slip the least word which may discover to this obliging gentleman, that I have sent you this Letter : you know the rigour of his exactness would not let him comprehend how such a licence could be allowable. Thus, my dear, I deliver myself up to you, conjuring you not to draw me into a quarrel with so good a friend, to whom we have so great obligations. In a word, I put myself into your hands, and knowing your fidelity, I apprehend no danger from thence : but you must likewise answer for Mr. de Grignan : for it would be no satisfaction to me to have my secret betrayed by him, though in the most gentleman-like manner.

I have another secret to tell you : this is with me a day of revealing secrets, and likewise of discovering disappointed lovers. Your brother is returned from Rennes : the only trophy he has brought from thence is a simple song, which has made me laugh. It expresses in verse a part of what I told you the other day in prose. We have thought of an agreeable match for him, but it is not yet ripe ; the fair-one is not quite fifteen, and they would have her a little more advanced in years, before they think of marrying her.

What do you say to the ingenious damsel we mentioned to you in our last, who was at a loss to determine the day after Easter-eve ? she is a pretty little creature, and diverts us much ; her
age

age is under fourteen. I wish you had seen her in a morning devour a slice of bread and butter as long as from hence to Easter, and in the afternoon scrump up green apples with brown bread. Her easy behaviour, and agreeable figure, are a relief to us after we have been teized with the impertinence and affectation of Mademoiselle du Pleffis.

Have they not sent the funeral oration of M. de Turenne? Mr. de Coulanges and the little cardinal have almost ruined me in the postage of Letters; but I am pleased with this expence. It seems to me, that I have never seen any thing so fine as this piece of eloquence. They say that the Abbé Fléchier has hopes of surpassing it; but I defy him. He may perhaps give us a finer picture of a hero, but not a finer picture of Mr. de Turenne: this is what Mr. de Tullies has performed inimitably in my opinion. The portrait of his heart is a master-piece: that genuine nature, that truth and integrity of which it was formed; in a word, that amiable character, equally free from the supple demeanor of pride, and the affected reservedness of false modesty, is represented so much to the life, that I am charmed with it; and if the critics cease to esteem it, since it has appeared in print,

I thank the Gods that I am not a Roman.

Will you not yet say one word of the Essays on Morality, the treatise of tempting God, and the resemblance between self-love and the love of others? It is a fine conversation that we maintain at a hundred leagues distance: however, we do all that is possible to be done in such a situation.

I send

I send you a billet writ by the Abbess, who is so famed for her politeness and good sense. Tell me, if these little pieces, which her serious character sometimes allows her to condescend to, are not very entertaining: this sample may suffice to give you a taste of the agreeableness of her wit.

Adieu, my dearest; I recommend to you all my secrets. I resign the pen to the pretty gentleman who stands at my elbow. He says you dipped yours in fire to write your last billet to him; it is true, nothing was ever so pleasant.

Continued by Mr. de Sévigné.

Why did I say in fire? it was in gall and vinegar that you dipped that impertinent implement, employed by you in making so many ridiculous reflections, begging your pardon, on your humble servant. From whence does a lady so skilful in gallantry, conclude that I am incapable of chusing a mistress? is it because I was for three years devoted to a pious damsel, who was only to be captivated by a lover qualified to charm her by the winning eloquence of his sermons, and the graceful manner of his benedictions on the prostrate people? you have great reason to believe that I was soon disengaged from her chains. You know me to be too good a catholic to dispute any thing with the church: and it is a regulation long since made, that the clergy are to have the preference of the nobility in obtaining favours from ladies. There has lately fallen into my hands a billet composed by this great luminary of the church. He addressed it to the saint
he

he adored, and humbly implored her to answer his tenderness by some mark of hers. These are his words: "Refuse me not, I beseech you this grace; and consider that you will do me a singular office"—of christian charity, I presume. Was not this very moving? if my Letters to Madame de Choisi were less passionate, they were not perhaps less gallant. I am now again grown a slave to another beauty, since I have been at Rennes. It is Madame de — she that behaved herself so prettily at the church of the Capuchins: you may remember that you diverted us with mimicking her. She is grown a wit, and repeats the elegies of the countess de la Suze in the dialect and accent of Brittany.

That precious piece of affectation Mademoiselle du Plessis is always with us from nine in the morning. She gave us the other day the pleasantest account in the world of a little secret malady which had given her great uneasiness. She said she was come to pay her devoirs to my mother, as soon as she could dispatch a certain remedy; not unknown to the fair, and often prescribed in civil terms to refresh and mollify the entrails; which she had been obliged to have recourse to, in order to allay a forenens occasioned by plentifully discharging a sharp humour by the help of rhubarb.

I wish you a happy day and a happy year, my dear sister; and desire the favour of you not to insult me, or undervalue my taste, which I assure you is very good: I leave it to be judged of by the love I have for Mr. de Grignan, whom I perfectly honour.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCCIV.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Saturday, 5 January, 1676.

HERE they are both of them, my dear, and they are both very heartily welcome. I never yet received three of them at a time; I should have been quite out of patience, because I must have waited for them twelve days; I think it too much to wait eight. As to my being fatigued with so much reading, it is impossible your stile should ever cloy; I should defy even you, who pique yourself upon such extreme delicacy and in-application, as renders it difficult for the most artful writer to engage your attention, to forbear to read even with eagerness the least part of such Letters as yours. This is a pleasure you have no possibility of experiencing, and which I have dearly purchased; I would not advise Mr. de Grignan to envy it me.

You have much obliged me by explaining to me the reasons of your going to Lambesc: I should not have failed to have asked with surprize and concern, what urgent affair can have drawn her thither? I think the little uneasiness of your having a wry neck, was well recompensed by its excusing you from the fatigue of dining with such a croud as you escaped by it; you did very well in leaving your herd to feed by themselves.

I shall

I shall never forget the astonishment I was under at a midnight mass, when I heard one of our profane airs sung as a part of that religious ceremony; this novelty surprised me extremely.

I suppose you have by this time read the *Essays on Morality*. Tell me, are you pleased with them? Josephus is one of the noblest historians one can read: you must confess there is a grandeur and a dignity in his history, which you can find in no other. If you entertained me more with yourself and your manner of employing your time, I should have less to say of my amusements, and our correspondence would be more agreeable. Between friends who entirely love each others thoughts, nothing is more pleasing than the mutual entertainment of speaking of themselves. We shall even retrench much from our accounts of things foreign to us, and enlarge the more on the delightful history of ourselves, in order to make our conversations agreeable to those who are most intimately endeared to us. You may have seen, by what my son has said of her in his Letter, that the damsel we are so familiarly acquainted with, gives entirely into this opinion: she agreeably instructs us in all the particularities relating to her person, which we have the least curiosity to know.

It were well if our soldiers here were like your Cordeliers; they only amuse themselves with stealing and plundering; the other day they were for making the experiment of putting a young child upon the spit; it would be endless to relate their other disorders. Mr. de Chaulnes writ to me that he desired to make me a visit; I very graciously
desired

desired him not to give himself that trouble, and frankly told him, I renounced the honour on account of the trouble it would occasion, since I could not receive him here with so much ease as at Paris.

You have seen my Letter of consolation to B——; you paint him to me so very naturally, that I still fancy his very thoughts are visible to me, if that be possible, for I own there is a great obscurity in his words.

You tell me very seriously, speaking of my Letter, that your father and I were not at all a-kin to each other: I desire to know how he was allied to you in your opinion? if you do not answer me to this question, I will ask the little damsel who is with us; perhaps she may resolve this difficulty as learnedly as she determined that concerning the day after Easter-Eve. We are so much taken with her ingenuity, that Mademoiselle du Plessis is almost dying for jealousy of her. She is solicitous to enquire of all the family how I treat her; and there are none of them to whom it is not a piece of diversion to stab her to the heart, by giving her repeated instances of my fondness for this little rival of hers. One tells her, that I love her as well as I do my daughter; another, that I make her lie with me, which would certainly be a great mark of my tenderness for her; another says, that I intend to carry her along with me to Paris, that I kiss her, that I doat on her, that my uncle the Abbé will give her ten thousand livres, and that, if she had but twenty thousand crowns, I should certainly marry her to my son: in a word, there are such fooleries of this kind, and they are so much the subject of discourse amongst my domestics, that we
are

are frequently constrained to laugh at the variety of tales they create. But while we are diverting ourselves, poor du Pleffis is dying with envy. But the pleasantest thing of all is, that you should know her so well, and reason so justly, when you observe upon her, that if her ague leaves her upon my approach, she certainly counterfeits it; however, she has been teized so much, that I believe we shall give it her in good earnest. This family is certainly destined to divert us. Did I never tell you, how her father kept us in a continual laugh for six weeks together? my son begins to comprehend that this neighbourhood makes the greatest beauty of the Rocks.

I think there is something very pleasant in the rendezvous of your traveller with Mr. Deverguez. Their arrival on the same day at the Cape of Good Hope seems to have fallen out as exactly, as if they had agreed to meet upon the plain at a certain hour, in order to a hunting-match. You cannot doubt of the pleasure it would be to me to converse with this gentleman from the Indies, for you remember how much I have importuned you to read Herrera, which I have read with great delight. If you have as much leisure and application as I have, this Spanish history would furnish an entertainment worthy of you.

Our good friend d'Hacqueville passes to and fro between Paris and St. Germain without ceasing, for the sake of our affairs; were it not for this, we should scarce pardon him for the tedious Letters, he favours us with. I confess to you, that passage you speak to me of, has a little too much repetition; but you will pardon my curiosity
which

which begun it, and my pen continued it; for I assure you the pen has often a great part in that endless flow of words with which our Letters are filled. To begin the year, I wish that mine may be as pleasing to you, as yours are to me.

The good Princess still loves me; she has been a little indisposed, and has invented a kind of a machine to make her sweat, which is the sovereign remedy she uses in all her distempers. The late count de Lude said, he had never had any illness in which he was not relieved by sweating. It is Mr. de Chesnay's remedy for all bodily pains; and if I had a wry neck, and made use of the Princess's remedy, you would be surpris'd to hear that I was under the Archet. The Princess always speaks wonders of you, she knows you, and esteems you. For my part, I believe that, according to the ancient doctrine of the transmigration of souls, your last stage of life was in Germany; you was, doubtless, that King of Sweden who was formerly one of her lovers; and from thence she has derived those impressions of esteem and affection she has for you. Adieu, my dear; all of our family salute yours. But here comes your brother.

MONSIEUR DE SÉVIGNÉ.

YOU are not able to comprehend, my dear sister, how extremely pleasant that is which you say of Mademoiselle du Pleffis, that you are confident she has taken the pains to act an ague this year, to make it fall out so exactly, that it should leave her the very day my mother came to Pleffis. The joy of hearing that my mother

ther was come thither it seems, transported her to such a degree, that she vowed by all that was sacred she found herself well on a sudden and was angry that she was not dressed. The company replied by asking her, whether she did not feel some little shivering, some symptom of the expected attack of her ague? Come on, replied this unparalleled dissembler, let us play, let us divert ourselves; let us speak no more of my ague; it is a sordid interested distemper. How do you mean interested, said my mother? why, madam, because it would have me all to itself. I should think it generous in that, replied my mother, aside. This severe repartee did not hinder, but that the pleasure of seeing so much good company at her house banished the ague, which she in reality had not; but we hope the excess of her jealousy will soon give it her. We are under some apprehensions that she will poison the little damsel, who goes every where by the name of the favourite of Mad. de Sévigné, and of the Princess. She said yesterday to Mr. Rahuel, I had the satisfaction, as I was sitting down at the table, to see madame push away this little girl, to make room to place me next to herself. Rahuel replied in his rough manner, oh Mademoiselle, I do not wonder at that, it was only doing honour to your age; besides, this young girl is considered at present as one of the family; Madame treats her as if she was a younger sister of Madame de Grignan. This was all the consolation she had.

You have reason to speak ill of the troops in Brittany; they do nothing but kill and plunder; they do not at all resemble your monks. Though I am very well satisfied with my mother and my uncle, and have some reason to be so; yet

I think I had best take your advice, and turn them out of doors at the end of this month : however, that I may do it in a handsome manner, I will send some guards with them to Paris, to prevent their being robbed, as they pass through a province so safe under the protection of military government. Adieu, my dear sister, I salute Mr. de Grignan : he makes me no answer, but I will take my revenge of him by continuing in good health, and coming off safe every campaign.

These are excellent fooleries to entertain you with. If the post knew what trifling materials our packets are made of, they would certainly drop them half way.



* L E T T E R CCCV.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 8 January, 1676.

THIS is the day on which I was to tell you my dream, my dear. You must know then that about eight in the morning, after having dreamt of you all the preceding night, though in a confused manner ; I thought I then saw you plainer than ever, and that we were together, and that you was so pleasant, so good-humoured, so amiable, and shewed so much fondness for me, that I was almost beside myself with joy ; at last I wakened, but with such a dulness and load upon my spirits with the grief at losing this lovely vision, that I

fell a sighing and crying in such an immoderate manner, that I was obliged to call *Maria*; and with the help of a glass of cold water, and some of your Hungary water, I recovered myself a little from the dreadful lowness of spirits, but could not get a wink more sleep. It held me near a quarter of an hour; and all I can say about it is, that I never felt myself in such a condition before. Observe however, that this is one of the days that I give my pen the reins.

You have passed a fortnight very dully at Lambesc: I should pity any other than you, but you have such a taste for solitude, that the time spent in that manner is a carnival to you. But what do you say to la St. Geran, that has left her fat husband to go and spend her carnival at Palissie? Such a journey as this, which cannot take her up less than a month, and at such a time of the year, is a matter of surprize to every one: she'll doubtless return time enough to attend the preachings. The great Bethune said, when he heard of Mr. de St. Geran's having received a wound by a cannon-ball before Befançon. "St Geran, says he, is an honest man, and a good man, but he must be killed before he will be truly esteemed." His wife however, does not think so, neither do I, but this was the first thing that happened to present itself to my pen. The Princess came here yesterday, quite weakened with her sweating. She is almost distracted at the ravages committed on her estate by the military gentry that we have amongst us here, and the little regard and concern that MONSIEUR and MADAME seem to take towards relieving her. She thinks that Madame de Monaco is instrumental to this forgetfulness, in hopes that by distressing her in her income, she may prevent her coming to Paris,

Paris, as her presence always robs her of some part of MADAME's favour, to whose sleeve she is forever pinned. Indeed the aversion is reciprocal: à propos of reciprocal, a gentleman belonging to the Princess told a very merry story, that when he was at the ball which M. de St. Malo gave to our states, he over-heard a Bas-Breton declaring his passion to a young lady, to which the fair one made a proper reply, but he continuing to push his suit with great ardour, the nymph quite tired out, made him this answer, "Sir, you may love me as much as you please, but upon my word I cannot be reciprocal." I think such kinds of answers are the best, and indeed the only ones that can be given, to cut such addresses short at once.

My son is gone to Vitré to see the ladies, he left a number of good wishes for you. I fancy that honest d'Hacqueville will settle the sum that is to be given for the consideration, and as Lauzun will take our guidonage, the little *Frater* will mount a step.

We have had dreadful weather here for these last two or three days. The trees rained in the park, and the shrubs in the garden. I believe all our marriage schemes have been carried away by the high wind; one father tells us his daughter is but fifteen, and he will not marry her till she is twenty; another, that he would have a robe at least: but however, we cannot reproach ourselves with suffering any thing to escape our attention. Adieu, my dearest child, let me embrace you.



LETTER CCCVI.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Friday, 17 January, 1676.

YOU have talked to me of wry necks till you have given me one at last, for I cannot move my right side; these are little ailments, my dear, that nobody compassionates, and yet I assure you they make one cry out; here is my hopeful son laughing till he is ready to split. I shall certainly give it him over the face as soon as I am able to do it. In the mean time, my dear, I embrace you most cordially in my left arm. The *Frater* here, is going to entertain you with an heap of idle stuff. Your Hungary water will have cured me before this Letter can have reached Paris. Adieu, my dear child.

Monsieur DE SÉVIGNÉ.

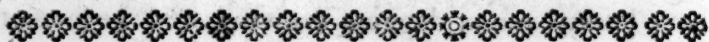
I AM not laughing at my mother, though she tells you so, but her disorder has nothing in it to cause the least uneasiness; and so we pity her, and amuse her in her bed, and do what lies in our power to make her easy. I imagine you will readily depend upon the Abbé and me, in what regards a health so precious to us both: be perfectly easy in this respect, my dear sister, for depend upon it, we shall be perfectly well before you begin to be uneasy about us.

I now

I now send you the history of our province, you are already informed on what a footing M. de Coetquen is with M. de Chaulnes; they have lately been at daggers-drawing, and the former has actually presented a memorial to the King, complaining of his conduct since he has had the government. After this, he returns to his government by his Majesty's orders, comes to Rennes, goes to wait upon M. de Pommereüil, and stays in the town from eight o'clock in the morning, till nine at night, without going near Mr. de Chaulnes, nor did he intend to go near him at all, as he told Mad. de Coetquen, and seemed to pride himself in braving M. de Chaulnes in his own capital. About nine at night, just as he had got to his inn, and thought of nothing but going to bed, he hears a coach stop at the door, and presently sees a person come into his room with an exempt's staff*; this was the captain of the guard to M. de Chaulnes, who desired him from his master to come immediately to the Bishop's palace, where he at present resides. Accordingly M. de Coetquen follows him down stairs, where he finds a coach, guarded by four and twenty troopers, which he gets into, and is conveyed safe and snug to the Bishop's palace. When he came there, he was introduced into the antichamber, and there left for near a quarter of an hour, with proper people to prevent his making his escape. At length M. de Chaulnes appeared and told him, "That he had sent for him to desire him to think of paving the francs-fiefs in his government; that he was acquainted with what he had said to his Majesty, which layed at his door to prove," and then turning his back upon him re-

* An *Exempt* is a kind of military messenger.

tired into his closet. Poor Coetquen was quite thunder struck, and returned to his inn, went to bed half mad with rage and vexation.



LETTER CCCVII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 19 January, 1676.

I AM much better, my dear, this same wry neck was in truth a very pretty fit of the rheumatism: it is a disorder attended with violent pain, and want of rest and sleep, but it gives one no apprehensions for the consequences. This is the eighth day; a little sweating, and a few purges will get me clear of it. I have been once bled in the foot, and now abstinence and patience will put the finishing stroke to it.

Well, my dear, I read your Letters yesterday with extreme pleasure, the conversation I find in them, delights me beyond expression: I desire you will not pretend to tell me that your success in Provence is a matter of indifference to you; I do not know what is pleasing, if so complete a victory is not; which at the same time is attended with the most agreeable and honourable consequences on your side. I have the pleasure of this agreeable news a little before you; and the assembly of the noblesse has put the finishing hand to my satisfaction: I send you M. de Ponponne's Letter, I think nothing can be fuller of generous and friendly sentiments. D'Hacqueville writes me word, that
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our Cardinal has a fluxion on his breast, which gives me great uneasiness. I could with great pleasure write you twenty or thirty pages, but it is really more than I can do at present. My son shall fill up the rest. Adieu, my dearest child, I can now embrace you with the right hand.

Monfieur DE SÉVIGNÉ.

YOU see, my dear sister, by what my mother writes, how matters stand with regard to her health, and how little reason there is to be in pain on account of her present disorder, which begins to go off by gentle sweats, which give her great ease; she was indeed so very bad that it cut us to the heart to be witnesses of it. I hope you do me the justice to believe, that I do all in my little power to relieve and assist her. I heartily wish I could be of any real service, but God help me, I am good for nothing, unless having brought Larmechin, who does wonders day and night. Your Letters are very necessary, and very efficacious in diverting the pains of our dear patient. It is a pity we cannot have them every six or eight days. We do not give much credit to your philosophical notions about your affairs in Provence; you may see by M. de Coetquen's affair, that I informed you of in my last, that your's is not the only province where there are intrigues and cabals. Is it not very high of d'Hacqueville, to write you an account of this affair, when we are but seven leagues distant from Rennes, just as if he thought we never heard any thing in this barbarous hole?

You have doubtless heard of the disputes that happened at the nuptials of la Mothe, which were not inferior to those that happened at the marriage of Thetis; for Discord with her snaky locks had insinuated herself amongst our Dutcheffes and Princeffes, those Goddeffes of the earth, but at length all is calmed, and there is no more talk of war, that we have at present upon our hands * is fully sufficient. We have read the verses of the opera; but you never saw tastes so corrupted as our's have been, since we have been in Brittany. We look upon the funeral oration of M. de Tullies as extremely beautiful, and we think the opera † this year infinitely superior to any we have had before; as we did not get it till yesterday, we have only read the prologue and the first act, which we honour with our approbation, but pray do not think that we do the same to the latter part of *Pharamond*, we anathematise every thing of that kind, that is not written by Calprenede.

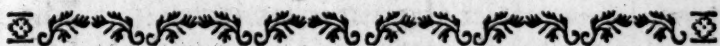
Adieu, my dear sister, we endeavour to divert our good mother as much as possible, which is all that she now stands in need of, for the distemper will have its course, and we do not think it will be finished in less than three weeks. Her fever left her just at the seventh day, which plainly shews you that there is no danger. Pray do not write us any Letters that may make us uneasy, they will come out of season, and the uneasiness of knowing that you have been in pain may not be quite so well for your lady mother's recovery.

* With the Dutch, the Spaniards, and the Germans.

† Atys, written by Quinault.

A thou.

A thousand compliments to Mr. de Grignan, and to his beard, one with another.



L E T T E R CCCVIII.

Monsieur DE SÉVIGNÉ,

To the Same.

The Rocks, Tuesday, 21 January, 1676.

IN the first place let me desire you, my dear sister, not to put yourself into a fright upon not seeing my mother's hand writing, but believe firmly in what is told you by the good Abbé and myself. The swelling still continues so much in her hands, that we do not think it adviseable to let them be exposed to the air: and another reason is, that since yesterday, which was the ninth of her disorder, the inflamed and swelled parts have began to sweat, which we must on no account suffer to be checked, as it is the forerunner of health, and the only means of getting the disorder out of her joints. Her fever is gone, and nothing remains but a little pain and a great swelling. This now is the real situation of our dear little mama. Do not imagine that any care is wanting, or that any precaution has been neglected. There is a very good physician at Vitré who has bled her in the foot admirably well. She is as well taken care of here as she could have been at Paris, and what is still better is, that she thinks so herself. In short, we should have no-

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thing.

thing to do but laugh now, could we find an expedient for her to lie in bed at the expence of any person's rump but her own, but as that cannot be done, it is a matter of great inconveniency. The disorder has been very severe and painful, and the first she has ever had in her life; but as it is become a kind of necessity to be ill this year, it is infinitely more eligible for her to have had this rheumatism with all its inconveniences, than one of those defluxions on the breast that have run so much about; especially as we are in a country where it is next to an impossibility to be bled in the arm with any degree of safety. The little girl who is here with us, when she used to see my mother's pains return always towards the evening, had nothing left for it but to cry. She is the immutable object of du Pleffis's jealousy, who makes no small merit with my mother of hating her like a devil.

I must tell you a droll adventure that happened amongst us this day; my mother was fallen into a little doze in her bed, the Abbé, the little girl, and myself were sitting round the fire, du Pleffis came in, we made signs to her to walk softly, which to give her her due, she obeyed very punctually; but as she was got about the middle of the room, my mother waked, coughing, and called for her handkerchief to spit into; the little one and I got up to give it her, but du Pleffis was beforehand with us, and running to the bedside, in the hurry of her zeal, instead of applying it to my mother's mouth, pinched her nose so hard that she made her cry out violently; my mother snuffed out her dislike of the indiscreet haste, and then we all fell a laughing, as you must have done, had you been witness to the scene.

Adieu,

Adieu, my dearest sister, be in no care nor concern for what is going on here: before this Letter reaches you my mother will have been to take the air a little in the garden; if any thing extraordinary should happen between this time and to-morrow, you shall know it before I close my packet. But the charm of it is, that nothing can now happen but for the better. I heartily embrace M. de Grignan.



L E T T E R CCCIX.

Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ,

To the Same.

The Rocks, Monday, 27 January, 1676.

MY hands still continue swelled, my dear child, but that is a certain sign of the going off of the rheumatism, which has been always losing ground since the crisis we mentioned to you.

Here Monsieur de Sévigné takes the pen and writes as Madame de Sévigné dictates.

So, my dear, the sweating completely carried off the remains of the distemper, but I was obliged to lye in bed for a fortnight without being able to move off my back, but now I am settled in my little alcove with every thing snug and warm about me. I wish I had not your brother
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for a secretary, that I might tell you all he has done for me on this occasion. My disorder has prevailed greatly in these parts, never failing to attack those who escaped the defluxion of the breast: but to tell you the truth, I did not look upon myself as subject to this common-law, but never was poor woman more humbled, nor treated more directly against her inclination. Had I made a proper use of this affliction, it might possibly have turned to my advantage, but I am impatient, my dear child, and cannot conceive how people can live without legs, arms, or hands; you must excuse this Letter, my dear, as the amusement of a sick person: when I next write to you, I hope to write like other people. I thought when I was ill with the fever, that I heard them say, that Cardinal Grimaldi * was dead; if it is so, I shall be very much concerned. Adieu, my dearest child, I only wait a recruit of strength, and the going down of the swelling. I embrace M. de Grignan. The Princess has behaved extraordinary well during my illness.

Monfieur de SÉVIGNÉ.

I HAVE nothing left to say to you, my dear sister, after this, only that the Abbé and I have had a dispute. He asserts that a line or two with my mother's own hand, however badly written, were absolutely necessary to-

* Jeronymo Grimaldi, Archbishop of Aix, died Cardinal Dean the fourth of November 1685, aged 90, extremely regretted by his whole diocese, especially by the poor, to whom he was a constant and noble benefactor.

wards making you quite easy ; I on the contrary maintained that they were more likely to encrease your fright ; and that you would have always done us the honour to confide in what we told you about her health, and that our manner of writing about it would have perfectly removed your uneasiness : this is my thoughts, for I can never suppose that you would look upon me so hardened or insensible as to write in a merry and joking strain, at a time when I saw myself threatned with the most dreadful of all calamities. Pray let us have your opinion to decide the dispute.

I salute M. de Grignan, and kiss la Dague's forehead.



* L E T T E R CCCX.

To the Same.

Dictated by Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ.

Written by Monsieur DE SÉVIGNÉ.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 29 January, 1676.

YOU will think it very odd, my dear, when I shall tell you that I am quite cured, that I have neither fever nor pains, and yet do not write to you : but the very reason of this is, because I am cured. My pains are turned to a swelling, so that my poor hand is no longer capable even of scrawling

scrawling as it has done for some days past. But this is an inconvenience that will not last a great while. I have now nothing left to do but to comfort myself for the uneasiness my bed has given me for this fortnight past. I begin to walk about my room, I recover my strength: this is no disagreeable condition, and therefore I desire you to be under no uneasiness on our account while we think ourselves so happy.

I have read your two Letters, they are divine, you make me most admirable representations, if ever I can get my hand free I will most certainly answer them; in the mean time be assured that you lose nothing by me either in point of correspondence or friendship. One of the greatest pleasures I had in my recovery, was the thoughts of its freeing you from the uneasiness you lay under, which now you ought to throw intirely aside, since we have told you the real truth, and that I am now in the high road to health. I embrace you my dearest child, from the bottom of my heart, *the Worthy* * does the same; and as to me, my dear sister †, you will believe I am not behind hand. I have nothing to say to you of my own to-day, save that I am very happy that we are so well out of this affair.

* The Abbé de Coulanges.

† This is written by Mr. de Sévigné as from himself.

LETTER



* L E T T E R CCCXI.

Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Friday, 31 January, 1676.

BE under no concern about me, my dear child; I am perfectly well, except that my hands and feet are violently swelled; but this, I am told, will soon go off.

Monsieur DE SÉVIGNÉ.

Oh, such curious writing! Do you not think that my mother had better not have wrote to you at all? We would have hindered her, but she would do it: I wish it may serve to make you more easy; and do you in return wish us a little patience to bear with the swelling and weakness of our limbs. My mother imagined that the instant her pains had left her, she might have gone to leap-frog. She is a little disconcerted to find herself so mistaken. All will go well, if our impatience does not produce any ill effects.

We would have sent a Letter of Mad. de Vin's, which my mother received by the last post; but we put it by so carefully, that there is no such thing as finding it. You must be contented then to know in general that it was a very
friendly

friendly and civil one. Mad. de Vins tells us that she is well persuaded that the Grignans had reason and right on their side, in these two last affairs, that she had not wrote to you, because she was sensible that you had too much good understanding, to be desirous of renewing the dispute, when the cause was removed. She adds, that she appeared to interest herself so warmly on the side of the Grignans, as being that of justice, that she is suspected by the other party. This is the general purport of the Letter, which I suppose we shall find in a fortnight or three weeks hence. There has been such pains taken not to lose, or mislay it, that it has certainly been put into some safe corner, where no body might get at it, and we cannot get at it ourselves. Adieu, my dear sister.



LETTER CCCXII.

To the Same.

Dictated by Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ.

Written by Monsieur DE SÉVIGNÉ.

The Rocks, Sunday, 2 February, 1676.

MY dearest child, we have read your two last Letters with a joy and satisfaction, that nothing, but themselves could produce; but we dread those which we are next to have from you, that you should cry out upon my disorder, and charge it to my own account, which indeed would

would not be doing me justice; for every living creature, in this country, has had rheumatisms, or defluxions; take your choice. Morbeuf has been desperately ill, with one of these, six weeks; so that you see, my dear, we must pay the tribute one way or another: and as to your frights and uneasinesses, they begin precisely at the instant they should end; for I am now out of all kind of danger: I am rid of my fever and pains, and have nothing left of my rheumatism, but a little swelling in my hands. I can compleat my cure by the exercise of walking, and recover all I lost by being confined to my bed: I have suffered some inconveniencies, my dear, but nothing that can be called danger. I think of nothing now but gathering strength, and returning to Paris, from whence I shall let you know how all matters go on.

I cannot write to you to day, my right hand being greatly swelled; the swelling in my left is quite fallen, and the skin looks all wrinkled; it is a very pleasing and comfortable sight to see it in this condition. I assure you the rheumatism is one of the prettiest things a person can possibly have; I have a very great respect for it. It has its beginning, encrease, decline, and end. Thank heaven, I am at present in the latter state.

I think I have shewn you, Mad. de Vins, and her brother-in-law, in a very satisfactory light, they appear so to me. They did not chuse to appear to be what they are; they have their reasons for it; and we certainly ought to allow our friends to serve us in that manner they think best. I think they have managed matters very circum-
spectly, with regard to Provence; this should be
the

the use of our behaviour, which is so much more easy and agreeable to be observed, as they have shewn me a little of the inside of the cards, which I assure you bear a pleasing aspect for you and yours. They have both of them wrote to me on hearing of my disorder, which is highly obliging ; here are the Letters, so my dear, I desire you will keep all these little things secret for me, and let us be both careful how we complain of people we have the greatest reason to commend.

I pretty well guess what a noise and bustle you have in your *rotunda* *. But this is a time of life to divert one's self in. As to your opinion concerning the Moral Essays, it is entirely my own. I scold your brother about it, but let him speak for himself.

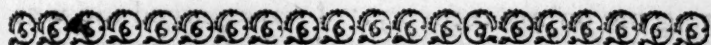
MONSIEUR DE SÉVIGNÉ.

And, I say, that the first treatise in the Moral Essays would appear to you in the same light as it does to me, if la Marans, and the Abbé Têtu had not accustomed you to such nice and abstracted notions. The most intricate stuff imaginable, appears clear and easy of conception to you. Of all the things that were ever wrote on man and his intellects, I never met with any one so little pleasing to me: the strokes and descriptions are such as are above the reach of every common capacity. M. Pascal, the Logician of Port-Royal, Plutarch, and Montaigne, talk in a very different manner. This writer argues for the sake of arguing, and some-

* A little closet or drawing room called the *Rotunda* because it was made in an old round tower belonging to the palace of the county of Provence, where M. de Grignan resided when at Aix.

times too, he has very little to say for himself. I maintain, that the two first acts of the opera are very pretty, and above the usual flight of Quinault: my mother agrees with me in this: but she intends to give you her opinion herself. Let us but know what you find fault with in it; we will answer for these two first acts; as for the assembly of the rivers, I give it you up.

My very pretty, and much loved sister, our mother embraces you with her wrinkled hand; and I would embrace you likewise if I durst, considering how we are fallen out.



L E T T E R CCCXIII.

To the Same.

Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ dictates.

Monfieur DE SÉVIGNÉ writes.

The Rocks, Monday, 3 February, 1676.

GUESS, my dear child, what is the thing in the world that comes the quickest, and goes off the slowest; that brings you the nearest to health, and removes you the farthest from it; that throws you into the most agreeable situation imaginable, and at the same time hinders you from enjoying it; that flatters you with the most pleasing hopes, and keeps you the longest from the accomplishment of them. Cannot you guess?
Do

Do you give it up? Why, it is the rheumatism. I have had it these three and twenty days; since the fourteenth of the disorder, I have been free from the fever and pains, and in this delightful situation, thinking myself strong enough to walk, which is the whole of my wishes; I find myself swelled all over, feet, legs, hands, arms; and this swelling which they call my cure, and in effect is so, is the sole occasion of all my present disquiet; was I good for any thing I might make it of some merit to me, but however, I think I am pretty well got over it, and that in two days time I shall be able to walk, Larmechin gives me hopes of it. I every day receive Letters from our friends at Paris, congratulating me on my recovery. I have purged me with Mr. de Lorme's powders, which has done me great good; I am going to take them again; it is a never failing remedy in these disorders. After this, I am promised an eternal succession of health; God grant it. My first step will be to return to Paris; therefore I desire you, my dear, to calm all your disquiets: you see how faithful an account we have given you of the affair, let that make you easy.

Before this packet is sealed up, I shall venture to ask my great hand if it will please to write a line or two to you; I am afraid it will not comply; but I do not know; perhaps it may.

Adieu, my dear and best loved child, let me beg of you to have a reverential awe of that thing, called a rheumatism; methinks this is the most important matter I have to recommend to you at present. Here is the *Frater*, who has been railing at you this week for speaking against M. de Lorme's powder when you was at Paris.

Monfieur

MONSIEUR DE SÉVIGNÉ.

Had my mother complied with the regimen prescribed her by that honest man, and taken some of his powders once a month, as he would have had her have done, she would not have had this disorder, which is wholly owing to an overrepletion of humours : but it was killing our mother to advise her to try a single dose ; and yet after all, this dreadful medicine that makes people shudder at its very name ; that is composed, Lord bless us ! of antimony ; that is an emetic ; works as gently, and with as much safety, as a glass of any of the purging waters, and without the least gripings or uneasiness, and has no other effect than that of making the head a little lighter, insomuch, that you are ready for making verses after it, if you take ever so little pains : but, no, it must not be taken ; are you mad, brother, to think of giving my mother antimony ! She wants nothing but a little dieting, and a cooling purge once a month : this was your ladyship's strain. Your servant, sister o'mine ; I am downright angry, when I think that we might have saved our mother this terrible disorder, had she been prevailed upon to have taken this powder, which is the most speedy restorative in the world, whatever she may be pleased to say against it in her impatience.

Are you fools, children, says my mother, to think that a disease is to be put out of its course ! Must not God's will be done ? Is it not our duty to submit ? All this is talking like a very good christian, to be sure ; but still give me de Lorme's powders, I say.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCCXIV.

To the Same.

Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ dictates.

Monsieur DE SÉVIGNÉ writes.

The Rocks, Sunday, 9 February, 1676.

THIS is just what I feared and foresaw, my dear, you are tormented with inquietude at the time that I am getting rid of my pain. I was greatly concerned for the effects the news of my being ill would have on you; knowing you as well as I do myself; but you see now what it has all turned out to, there never was the least appearance of danger. We never intended to deceive you in the least from the beginning; I told you I had a wry neck, and I thought it was nothing more: but the next morning it declared itself the rheumatism in form; that is to say, one of the most painful and tiresome disorders in the world; and now that I am cured, and can walk about my room, and have been at mass, I am cured with pultices. I guess with what impatience you waited for our second letter, and I cannot sufficiently express my obligations to Roquesante for partaking in your uneasiness and impatience. I have all heroes in friendship of whom I have the highest opinion. I thank the little ones for thanking God so heartily for my recovery, and I promise M. de Grignan two lines under my hand

as soon as I have got rid of my pultices. I desire you will return my thanks to all the ladies who have been so particular in their enquiries after me; for though I am sensible it is done only in the view of pleasing you, yet it cannot fail even upon that account to be highly satisfactory to me. I am in great fear of your brother's leaving me; all his Letters from Paris are filled with reviews, brigades and war.

I entreat you to be careful of your health, you know you cannot give me a more sensible proof of your friendship. Adieu, my dearest child, I embrace you most tenderly. The *Frater* is going to write to M. de Grignan.

Monfieur de SÉVIGNÉ,

To Monfieur DE GRIGNAN.

THOUGH my sister may have taken the greatest care imaginable to conceal from you her condition, yet you may depend on it, my dearest brother, that I should have been very cautious in what manner I had written to her, had we perceived any thing of danger in my mother's disorder, but happily we had only the vexation to see her racked with insupportable pains, without the least occasion for apprehension. This you might have easily perceived by our Letters; which were such as might have made you quite easy on that head, I hope you are persuaded, brother, that I should not have been wanting in my duty on this occasion. My sister has too strong an hold in my heart for me ever to forget her. At present we have the satisfaction to be spec-

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tators of an hourly change, for the better, in my mother's health; and I am less concerned at the disorder she has suffered, as I hope it may be the means of inducing her to take more care of herself for the future, as finding herself a mortal person; and as it is to this that I am indebted for your Letter, which is the most obliging and friendly in the world, believe me, Sir, that no one can honour you more sincerely than myself, nor be with greater esteem and tenderness, &c.

The Same

To Madame DE GRIGNAN.

AND now for you my dear sister, in order to inform you of what you desired to know by the first post, which however could not be done unless we had been like my uncle of Chalon's * valet, who wrote word that his master had had a quartan ague ever since yesterday. You was informed of all that there was for you to be informed of at that time, so I think you ought rather to think of returning us your thanks, than to take upon you to scold us, for in that you do us a great piece of injustice.

We have got the Abbè de Chavigni for our bishop of Rennes: this you will suppose does not greatly displease us, laying aside his dislike to Montagne. I embrace you a thousand times, my dearest sister, and desire you to make M. de Grignan my farther respects: I have at length seen a

* N. de Neufchaife bishop of Châlons.

ter from him to another person besides yourself, which I shall carefully preserve, as a trophy of his goodness and my glory : this may serve to shew my sense of it.



L E T T E R CCCXV.

Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ,

To Madame DE GRIGNAN.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 12 January, 1676.

MY dear child, I am now out of the question. I am quite well: that is to say, as well as a person can be on coming out of the rheumatism, for the swellings are so long a going away, that there would be no keeping one's patience, if it was not the condition one comes out of, makes the present seem a happiness. Is it true that the Chevalier has been in the same dilemma? I conceive how the *petit glorieux* can suffer a disorder, that begins to exercise it's power over you by tying you hand and feet. They say that the Cardinal de Bouillon likewise has had his share of this little piece of humiliation, oh, the good disorder! it is well done of it, to let the courtier feel it a little. My son is gone to Vitré on a little business, therefore I have conferred the post of secretary on the *little body* whom I have so often mentioned to you, and who desires most respectfully to kiss your hands. Here is a Letter that the good Princess has just sent me for

you.

you. I assure you I am greatly taken with the extreme politeness and friendship of this action; I am under no concern about the manner in which you will return it.



LETTER CCCXVI.

Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ dictates.

Monsieur DE SÉVIGNÉ writes.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 16 February, 1676.

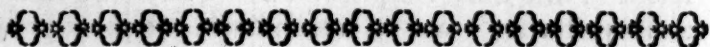
SINCE you are to decide the question, whether it is not better to be without the writing of a person that we love, than to see them write badly; I think I will not propose any thing of the kind this time to my poor swelled hand; but I entreat you, my dear, to banish all uneasinesses. My son made me walk abroad a little yesterday, in the finest day imaginable: I found myself greatly strengthened by it, and if my swellings would but leave me, I should be in perfect health. As I dearly love to be made much of, I am not displeased at your compassionating me a little, and joining with me in the persuasion, that the rheumatism in the manner I have had it, is the most cruel and tormenting pain a person can have. Your brother has been of inexpressible consolation and assistance to me; he is a very pretty adept in fevers, and the art of preserving health. I put the utmost confidence

dence in all that he said; he compassionated all my pains, and good luck would have it that he has not failed in one thing he promised me, no not so much as in yesterday's walk, which has done me a great deal of good. Larmerchin on his part, constantly attended me for upwards of five weeks: in short, I do not know what I should possibly have done without these two good people. If you want any more anecdotes relating to the rheumatism, enquire of poor Marignane, whom I pity from the bottom of my heart, for she is in the very condition from which I am just recovering. Don't imagine that the head-dress and the toupée that you reproach me with, have been in fashion this time. I have been seriously ill, and for the first time in my life.

I now wait for more strength and shall then set out for Paris, whither to my great regret my poor boy must go before me. I am greatly affected with the devotion observed at Arles, but I fancy the Coadjutor never suffers his to carry him such lengths: we greatly want to hear the consequences of this extraordinary zeal.

I am very glad that you have seen the inside of the cards relating to Mr. de Pomponne and his sister-in-law's proceedings, and that you have adopted their politics, without letting any thing of it be perceived at Paris: they are friends on whom we may safely rely. Adieu, my dear child, I think this is all I have to say to you. If it was not for my being a little anxious about you and your health, I should be in a condition worthy envy. But it is not for wretched mortals to taste happiness unallayed. I embrace M. de Grignan with great

cordiality, and you, my dearest, with unbounded tenderness.



LETTER CCCXVII.

Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ,

To the Same.

The Rocks, Ash-Wednesday, 19 February, 1676.

I HOPE, my dear, you passed your carnival better than I did: I see nothing to have hindered your doing it: you have long since had reason to be easy on the subject of my health. I am a little discomposed by it at present, indeed, for the insupportable tediousness of a rheumatism is beyond conception, now a pain in one hand, then a twitch in t'other, all remembrances of those that the fit began with: in short, it is no small business to recover one's health perfectly; accordingly I set very seriously about it; there is no fear of my relapsing, through my own fault, for I am afraid of my own shadow, in so much that they make a perfect jest of me; so that altogether I make what you may call a disagreeable companion enough. Add to this that the good Abbé is not very well, he has an ugly pain in one of his knees, with an uneasiness towards the evening that I do not at all like.

Madame de Marbeuf came from Rennes to see me, but I sent her to the Princess to spend her Carnival, I expect them both here to see me. My son has passed two or three days there.
He

He is to leave us in five or six; this will be a real loss to me, but he cannot possibly delay his departure: I shall think of nothing but following him as soon as possible. But, my dear child, what is to cure me of the inquietude I suffer on your account? this is extreme indeed, and I every day beseech God to relieve me from it, by news such and as happy as I desire it. I do not know when my Letters will become supportable again; at present they are so dull and full of myself, that I have not patience to hear them read; your taste is too good not to make you think the same, and so I will conclude immediately; but see, the little wench * laughs at me.

I wait in expectation of your Letters as the only joy my heart can taste, it is a pleasure to me to enter into all you write, and to extricate myself from what I write myself. Adieu, my dearest and ever lovely child, you know how much I am your's: preserve for me a friendship so tender and so dear. I embrace M. de Grignan and the little ones. How does poor Marignane, methinks the rheumatism makes us neighbours. I send you a dozen of remembrances to distribute as you think proper; but there is one for Roquesante, which must never be confounded with the rest.

* The young person who was writing for Madame de Sévigné.



L E T T E R CCCXVIII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 23 February, 1676.

WHAT! brought to bed at the eight months end, my dear, and that what a happiness you are so well! and yet what a pity it is to have lost such a pretty little boy! you who are so prudent and apt to condemn others for their want of care; you to take it in your head to wash your feet*, when you had carried matters so prettily on for so long a time; how could you ever think of risking all, and your life in the bargain? but if I am not mistaken, your labour did not go on so well as it should do: but after all, my dear, by God's blessing you have gotten well over it; you wanted no help. You may imagine with what impatience I wait for a second packet to hear more particularly of your health, and how full my head will be of this lying-in and all it's circumstances. I give you many thanks for your three lines, and you my dear count, for the care you was at in giving me so speedy and exact an account. You know what the health of your dear wife is to me: but you let her write too much. And so it was this same washing of the feet it seems, that brought on the labour. I cannot get over the loss of

* Madame de Grignan by imprudently washing her feet, had brought on her labour, and was delivered of a son at eight months end.

the poor infant; and I stand in need of all your christian reflections to support me; for say as you please, you will never be able to save it's life at eight months. I should have been afraid that it had been occasioned by the concern she was under on account of my illness, had I not known there was a fortnight's interval. However God be praised a thousand and a thousand times since my dear countess is well. My life hangs upon her health, therefore let me recommend it to your particular care, my dear count, and I accept very heartily of the rendezvous at Grignan.



L E T T E R CCCXIX.

Monfieur DE SÉVIGNÉ,

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 23 February, 1676.

C O M E on, sister o'mine, come on, give us some of your sage advice for the management of health, and then we will answer you out of the bible, *Physician heal thyself*. I have no small advantage over you now I think, for by my good management, simple as I am, our people have taken the field. In a word, my mother is as well as possible: yesterday for the first time, she took de Lorme's powders, which did her great service, she walks abroad in fine weather; I gave her my advice and she follows it; she finds the benefit of so doing, for we are not brought to bed at the eight months

end at our house : after this I fancy she will trust to me in what relates to her health, and have a proper contempt for your little capacity that suffered you to wash your feet for two hours together, when you was eight months gone with child : nevertheless we forgive you, in consideration of your being pretty well, and of the Letters which we have received from you, Mr. de Grignan, and the little Dague, which extricate us from all uneasiness.

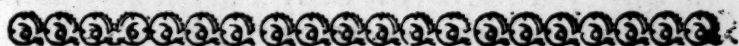
However cautious you was in informing us of this news, my mother was affected with it in such a manner as alarmed us a good deal. We were at cards when the packet was brought ; she desired du Pleffis, who sat looking on, to open it. The first he saw was that of La Dague to me ; when he read the word *delivered*, which happened to be the first that presented itself on the outside fold, my mother gave a great cry, without staying for the rest of the contents, which were as full of humour as could be, and freed us presently from any inquietude. However she was greatly surprised, but this only proceeds from the weakness which the disorder has left upon her spirits : indeed there was some reason to be alarmed at first, but when we saw the droll manner la Dague wrote in, we were presently easy. But my mother still wanted to see some of your own writing.

I desire Mr. de Grignan will be pleased to accept of the compliments I now make him on your health, and the sincerest wishes for the life of his son : he will not doubt of my sincerity if he will only do me the honour to judge of me by himself, and recollect how far short this falls of those tears with which he favoured me about eighteen

MARCHIONESS DE SÉVIGNÉ. 227

teen months ago upon a certain piece of news from the camp: as to la Dague, I shall say nothing to her at present, I shall wait for an opportunity of revenge, till I can hide myself on that stair-case at Grignan, where the wind has such a fine effect.

I embrace you a thousand times, my dearest sister. There is no danger to day, for it is a long time since I put any powder in my wig.



L E T T E R CCCXX.

Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ,

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 26 February, 1676.

I WAIT with the utmost impatience, my dear child, for my Friday's Letters: I am still in need of that pleasing confirmation of a health so dear and precious to me: I embrace you tenderly, my dearest, and shall finish by the hand of my secretary.

I make no farther mention of my health, as that is now perfectly established, save the swelling of my hands, which is not down yet; could one write with one's feet, you should soon have long Letters from me: in the mean time, laying aside all thoughts of sickness, I am wholly taken up with the news I received from Provence; which is of importance enough to arrest all my attention; but provided you still continue in good health, I

have great reason to be thankful to God. The weather here is extraordinary fine, which helps greatly to recruit my strength, and hasten my return to Paris.

I am told that the Prince has excused himself from serving the ensuing campaign : I think he is perfectly in the right. M. de Lorges is at length a marichal of France : Don't you wonder at it, when you reflect how easily it might have been done six or seven months ago ? My Letters are filled with nothing but the return of Mr. and Madame de Schomberg ; I fancy he will go to Germany. Our folks here will have it, that I am able to ride in a coach since I have heard of your being safely delivered ; it is certainly a very great step towards recovery to have the mind at ease : however I am in hopes of having it still more so, after having received one more packet.

Adieu, my dearest, my best beloved : my son is going to Paris, in order to put the finishing hand to a surprising affair that la Garde has entered into with young Virville, relating to the buying our guidonage. I love la Garde sincerely, and desire you to do the same, and that you would write to him in return of the obligations I have to him. Adieu my dear.



L E T T E R C C O X X I.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, first day of March, 1676.

LET me tell you, my dear, how fortunate and happy I am. Tuesday last I fully expected Letters from you, which never used to fail me on that day: I had been a whole week in painful expectation: the packet comes, I open it, but no Letter from you: I thought I should have swooned away: I had not strength to support such a sudden surprize. Alas! what would have become of my recovering health with such an anxiety as this to support? How could I have passed the tedious moments till Monday? But see how wonderfully d'Hacqueville is destined to do me good offices, for in doing a thing that there was no kind of necessity for him to have done (as I was naturally to have had Letters from you myself) he restored me to life and health by sending me the Letter he had received from Davoneau of the 19 February, written at your desire, and giving an account of your perfect health (this was the tenth day of your lying-in) and that of the little one. What comfort was this in a moment! how did I pass from the extreme of grief and trouble, to a well-founded and rational tranquility! I expect my wandering packet next Monday; ah, cruel packet to wander the only day that of all others I most earnestly wished for you!

but

but that charming Letter of the 19th, has set my heart at ease, and I shall now return to the care of my health, which I had began to abandon.

My poor hand can do no more, and so I embrace you and my dear count. What follows is by the hand of my little secretary.

To return to d'Hacqueville, I will henceforwards take care how I condemn him for his excessive carefulness, since it has been so salutary to me: I must own that had I received my two Letters as regularly as I ought, I should have laughed heartily at this piece of over-care of his, as I do when he sends me news from Brittany, but no more laughing since this last unspeakable satisfaction which he procured me.

My son is gone, and we are solitary enough without him. The little girl and I sit together and read, and write, and say our prayers. I am carried out in my chair into the park, which is delightfully pleasant this fine weather, and strengthens me greatly: I have had a great many pretty alterations made in it, which I shall not be much the better for this year, for my face is set towards Paris; my son is there already, about the affair of the guidonage. The good Princess visits me sometimes, and seems to take great concern about your health. La Marbeuf is gone away; she was a great comfort and assistance to me, in that amiable disorder of mine called the rheumatism. Adieu, my dearest and ever loved child. I most heartily thank M. Davoneau for his Letter of the 19 February.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCCXXII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 4 March, 1676.

AT length, my dear, I have received those two Letters I so earnestly expected and desired. I am delighted to hear of your health, but do not fatigue yourself so early with too much writing. I thank M. de Grignan and Montgobert for having hindered you from doing it, besides I am not deserving of it, for I have no hands. I only request an answer for the Princess, and two lines for myself. I am really wearied out with so tedious a distemper, and shocked at the thoughts of returning lame to Paris. I have put my physician here upon his mettle, and have likewise wrote to my son to consult some able person of the family in Paris, to know if there can be nothing done to hasten a cure, after suffering for two months continually. Let me know how Marignane does, and whether she labours under the same inconvenience with myself. I am charmed to hear the little boy is so well; but I dare not beset my heart too much upon him, as I dare not hope that you should be deceived in your conjectures, knowing you more infallible than the Pope: so I build all my expectations on the old wives tales that were told you at Aix: I think some of them very droll, and the rarity of children born at nine months made me laugh very heartily.

To

To Monsieur DE GRIGNAN.

And now for you, my good count, you say that my daughter ought always to lye in, she does it with so good a grace, Lord God! does she do any thing else? But let me tell you, Sir, that unless you give this pretty machine a little rest you will entirely destroy it, and that methinks would be a pity. Let me desire you to think of what I say to you, my dear count, believe me it is no gossip's tale.

To Madame DE GRIGNAN.

I now return to you, my dearest, I imagine you are very well pleased to see the Coadjutor and la Garde, Is not the latter to return to court? We are going to see how the affair he put upon the carpet is likely to turn out: we are afraid it is rather too good to succeed. I hear from Paris that the Chevalier is greatly displeased at not being made brigadier; he is much in the right, after his behaviour last year*; he very well deserves to mount a step higher. Adieu, my dearest child, the good Abbé embraces you, and my little secretary here kisses your left hand. My hand still continues as usual, but you are well, and then I am so too.

* At the battle of Altenheim.



L E T T E R CCCXXIII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 8 March, 1676.

YOU may believe, my dear, that if my hand could write for any one, it would for you; as to the rest of the world, I do not think about. I keep my scrawl entirely for you, and notwithstanding your decision of the question, I believe you had rather see that than none at all: the rest will excuse me then. But here is my pretty little 'secretary come very á propós to relieve my shaking hand.

You are too obliging, my dear, to offer to come and spend the summer with me, I make not the least doubt but you would do it, as you tell me so, and was it not for the little uneasinesses I still suffer (for the rheumatism you must know is a thing I am going to compose a treatise about) I should very contentedly see our good Abbé set out by himself, a fortnight hence, and remain in this delightful desert, and with so sweet a companion the whole summer. But I must now set out a dog-trot for Paris. When I was in the worst of my disorder, I was saying, that no one was more likely than yourself if you knew how ill I was, to come and surprise me one morning at the bed's foot. You see, my dear, what an opinion I have of your
love

love and friendship, and how great a confidence I repose in you.

I assure you, my dear, I am greatly delighted with the good state of your health, it gives me the greatest encouragement to endeavour to perfect mine ; but for this pleasing incentive, I should have totally abandoned the care of it. It is no small undertaking to get over a rheumatism, but the ardent desire I have to be of service to you in your affairs, and a glimmering of hope, that I may perhaps see you ere long, will make me exert myself surprisingly. You have painted Vardy to me in a divine manner : you need want no other hand, your pencil is no ways inferior to that of Mignard.

I would fain have you answer the good Princess ; I am afraid you did not sufficiently enter into the friendly and obliging style of her Letter. Let me know, my dear, in what condition you are after your uprising : is your complexion unhurt ? I love to hear about your person : for my part, I will tell you that my countenance within this fortnight is the same as ever it was ; I am very little fallen away, and I walk upon my *binder feet* like another ; I eat with an appetite, but have bid adieu to suppers for ever ; so that excepting my swellings, a few flying pains that come and go, and serve to remind me of my dear rheumatism, I am no longer worthy being an object of your sollicitude.

I have just received a Letter from the Cardinal, who assures me that he is much better. I have likewise received a thousand favours from the dear

dear Grignans. Adieu, my dearest, be under no apprehensions of a relapse on my side. My excessive carelessness with regard to my health is turned to a great fearfulness. Do you not greatly pity poor Lauzun that he cannot work at his hole * any longer? Don't you think he will dash his brains out against the wall? I am still much delighted with the *Moral Essays*, and you was mistaken in thinking that the sentiments of a certain person would make me alter mine. The treatise on tempting God, presses us a little to do that for the sake of our salvation which we should otherwise do out of self-love. Carbonelli says, our friends are molinists on this head. I think the Coadjutor and you are admirable herein: if you did but say your prayers every day, you would be perfect saints; but you will not do it; and this is an example of that will which St. Augustine describes so well in his confessions. I wonder how far my love of talking will carry me.

My dearest child, embrace your mother, for she cannot embrace you; but what of that? I am otherwise well, and the present little ailment will soon be removed. I have been a thousand times better here, than I should have been at Paris: I have been served and attended like a Queen.

* Mr. de Lauzun was discovered in attempting to make an hole in the wall of the room where he was confined at Pignerol.



LETTER CCCXXIV.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 11 March, 1676.

I MAKE a wash for my hands, with a prescription of old de Lorme's, it has done me some little service, at least, I think so. But upon the whole, my dear, I can assure you I am very well; it came into my head to take particular care of my feet, and it is well I did, for they have saved my life: I am every day in my wood, where there is now a perfect summer; but about five o'clock, I am obliged to leave them, at which I could almost cry: it is a mortification I am not at all used to. I am in hopes of setting out the next week: and do you know if I had not courage enough to go, the Abbé would certainly go without me? I have heard no news yet from my son about his affairs: his whole subject hitherto has been about honest de Lorme, and my health: Is he not a good lad? I expect a Letter from you next Friday, with an answer for the Princess.

One of the greatest pleasures I enjoy is that of hearing from you, methinks I can never know enough of what relates to you: you always cut short when you are speaking of yourself, which is not the way to treat those who love you so well. I have a whole cart load of news from Paris; one sends me a wonderful prophecy of Notradamus; another

another a story of a surprising battle of birds in the air, which after having continued for some time, there were found two and twenty thousand dead upon the place. *When the sky falls we shall have larks in plenty.* Of all this, we do not believe a single syllable here.

Adieu, my dearest child. I embrace the count after having offended him.



LETTER CCCXXV.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 15 March, 1676.

I AM in despair at the infinite deal of uneasiness I cause you : how many needless pains do we suffer in absence ? Our joy and our sorrow is never properly placed. I still continue de Lorme's wash, but the cure goes on so slowly, that I have much more hopes in the fine weather than in all the good body's simples. As to the rest, I find myself so well that I am resolved to set out next Saturday for Paris, where there are a thousand things waiting my presence. You would laugh, my dear child, to see me like a hen-hearted creature as I am, (what a change !) looking at my watch every now and then, and thinking five o'clock a very late hour. I am really surprised at the little one's continuing in such good health ; it will be admirable if he can be reared.

What

What you say of Vardy is admirable: I know how much he dreads your epigrams; it is too much to have both you, and his own conscience against him at once. I am in hopes that the *Frater's* affair will turn out as we could wish. He will get the ensigncy for 11,000 francs: I do not see how he could have done better, for M. de Virville will be always ready to take the place of him whenever he is weary of it. I was very sensible to the mortification of the Chevalier, and think with you, that there were a thousand reasons for complying with his request. The Duke de Sault, after a long conversation which he had with the King, has quitted the service, and will attend his Majesty as a volunteer. You see we have not a few of the grumblers.

I could have wished, my dear, you had not been so remiss in answering the good Princess's Letter, but have given her more early proofs of your sense of the friendship and esteem she has on all occasions shewn for me. You are in child-bed that's certain, and I have made the most of so reasonable an excuse. Yesterday I took the good man's powder again: it is an admirable medicine: he may well call it *le bon pain*, for it does every thing one could wish; it does not heat, it does not disorder one at all. I am now perfectly well reconciled to it: I fancy this last dose will compleat my cure.

I embrace you, my dearest, and the count, and the little one: God preserve you all in perfect health. Well, for these nine weeks past I have had no hands; they never bleed in this country in rheumatisms: God sits the back to the burden;
of

of all the disorders that could have befallen me, I have had that which was the most proper to mortify my insolence, and make a chicken-hearted wretch of me; for I would now run a thousand miles to avoid one of the pains I suffered; but you, my dear, who have lately suffered such severe ones, with what courage, what firmness of soul do you bear them! may that noble soul long remain in union with that lovely body. I love you, my dear; with unutterable tenderness, and my greatest joy is, that I have reason to believe you are the same with regard to me.



L E T T E R CCCXXVI.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, 18 March, 1676.

MY dear child, I am resolved not to strain my hand, and therefore write to you by my little secretary.

In the first place, I am to inform you, that when I no longer knew what to do with my hands, Providence sent me M. de Villebrune, who is an excellent physician; he advised me to have them sweated, and I directly did so, by holding them over the vapour of several curious herbs; I am persuaded this is the best prescription I have had yet, and that this transpiration must be very wholesome. I shall not set out till Tuesday, on account of the Equinox, which Villebrune advised me to avoid

avoid by a thousand examples, in short, Villebrune is all in all with me now. I fancy the good Princess will pay a visit to MADAME, on the death of M. de Valois. The marriage of Mr. de Lorges is somewhat admirable to me: I am delighted with the father-in-law's good taste. But what do you say to Mad. de la Baume, who has obliged the King to send an Exempt to take Mademoiselle de la Trivoliere * from under her father and mother's care, and placed her with one of her sisters-in-law at Lyons. It is not doubted but that she will get her married to her son. It is something odd to tell you the news of Lyons, but I could not help mentioning this affair to you. I have not seen Flechur's funeral oration yet; is it possible it can equal that of M. de Tulle?

Adieu, my dearest child, our fine weather continues. If it was not for being a Valetudinarian I should regret leaving the Rocks; but as I am in continual dread of the dews, and so must pass the fine summer evenings in my chamber, the length of the day would tire me to death, and so I am going.

I embrace you, my dear count; I am so weary of this horrid scrawl of mine, that was it not for alarming you all, I would not write another stroke till my hands were perfectly well. Such a tedious recovery is very mortifying to one, whom you know to be not over-burthened with patience, but we must submit when God sees fit: this has

* She was afterwards married to M. de Tallard, son to Madame de la Baume, and afterwards marshal of France.

served me very right; I was vain of my own strength; this has taught me how weak I am. Forgive me, my dear girl, that I am always talking of myself, and my disorders, but I promise you to be better company when I get to Paris; and that is one great reason of my wishing to be there, that I may rid my brain of the remembrance of my past sufferings. The Rocks is the properest place in the world to nourish melancholy thoughts. But may I hope to see you some day, ere long, in the *Paterno Nido**.



L E T T E R CCCXXVII.

To the Same.

The Rocks, Sunday, 22 March, 1676.

I AM in very good health, my dear, but my rebellious hands will not hear reason. I therefore employ the little body for the last time: it is the sweetest girl in the world; I do not know what I should have done without her, she writes in the manner that you see; she is fond of me, obliging, and can talk about Madame de Grignan: in short, I must beg you to love her for my sake.

The LITTLE BODY for herself.

I should be too happy, madam, was that the case: I am rather afraid you envy me the pleasure of being constantly about the good lady, your mother: she made me write so much in praise

* *Parental nest.*

of myself, that I am perfectly ashamed of it ; and I am grieved to the last degree at her leaving us.

Continued for Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ,

My little girl had a mind to prattle awhile : but now I return to you, my dear child, to tell you. that you have no reason to say, you can form no idea of me as I am at present. My face is not altered, my mind and temper are the same as ever : I am a little thinner indeed, but that I am not displeased with : I walk abroad and take the air, without any uneasiness ; and the only reason of their sitting up with me is, because I cannot conveniently turn myself yet in my bed ; but I sleep like a top. I must own this is a little inconvenient, and I find it so, but, my dear, we must suffer whatever it pleases God to lay on us ; and I may think myself very happy in being so well as I am, for you know what sort of a thing a rheumatism is to deal withal.

But they tell me I have quite got rid of it ; I wish it may be so for your sake, my dear, and the love you bear me : besides, I should not be very unwilling myself to give you this proof of my gratitude. The good Princess has been to pay me a visit to day : she enquired if I had heard from you, I wished for your answer, to have given her. The indolence of a country life makes one attentive to these little things. I could not help blushing when this came into my head, and she reddened a little too. I should have been glad that on my account you had discharged that debt a little sooner : she sets off on Wednesday, on account of the death of Mr. de Valois, and I shall set out on Tuesday, that I may lie at Laval. I shall not write to you on Wednesday,

day, so do not be uneasy about not hearing from me. But I shall write from Malicorne, where I intend to make a halt for two days to rest myself: I begin already to regret the want of my little secretary.

You imagine that we have bad weather here, my dear child, we have Provence-weather, but what surprises me is, that you have Brittany-weather with you: I imagined you had the season a thousand times finer, and you, that we had it a thousand times worse than it really is. I have made the most of the fine weather, imagining we may have a return of winter in April or May, which I am accordingly going to pass in Paris. And now had you but seen me play the tender sick-lady in my bed-gown, and my arm-chair, and my pillows, and my night-cap, believe me, you would not have known me again for the person who used to dress so light and airy, and be so very careless of her covering; but this rheumatism has wrought a total change. I forgot to tell you that my uncle Sévigné is dead. Madame de la Fayette now enters into her mother's fortune. Mr. du Pleffis-Guinégaut is dead also. You know what is necessary to be done with respect to his wife.

Corbinelli tells me, I lose all my wit and spirit, when I dictate, so that he will correspond with me no longer: I believe he is in the right; I find my stile flat, but do you be generous, my dear, and continue to charm me with your agreeable Letters. I shall set out on Tuesday, the roads are as good as in summer, but we have a sharp north east wind that cuts my poor hands to pieces: I must have hot weather for them, sweating

signifies nothing : I am very well, all but that, and it is droll enough to see a woman that looks well in the face, feeding like an infant ; but one becomes used to these inconveniences.

Adieu, my dearest, continue to love me, and by that, merit the tenderest attachment that ever united parent to child. I felt our separation during my illness, and often thought, that it would have been a great comfort to have had you with me. I have ordered matters so, as to meet with your Letters at Malicorne. I embrace the count, or rather, I desire him to embrace me. I am wholly your's, and so is the good Abbé, who is reckoning and calculating from morning till night, and is never a penny the richer for it, so completely have they fleeced this province.



LETTER CCCXXVIII.

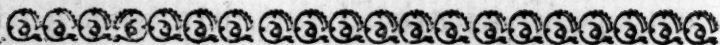
To the Same.

Laval, Tuesday, 24 March, 1676.

AND why should I not write to my dear girl to-day, if I can? I set out this morning from the Rocks, with the weather most delightful and warm : spring is opened in our woods. The *Little Body* was taken off by times in the morning to prevent the violent sallies of her grief : her sorrows are the sorrows of a child, but then they are so natural, they come so immediately from the heart that one cannot help being affected by them ; perhaps

haps she may be dancing now. Two days ago she was a perfect fountain: I have given her no good example of self-governance. You allow one capable, my dear, of uniting tenderness and resolution. I am very well, and behaved very well upon the road. The confinement in the coach somewhat offends my knees, but when I get out and walk a little, it sets them to rights. My hands, my poor hands are still bad, but I am in hopes that the warm weather will cure them, it would give me no small joy. It is surprising how people accustom themselves to sickness and ailments; was any one to have told me, that I should have been able to have undergone the pain and fatigue I have, I should never have believed it, and yet so it has been, and so it is.

The good Abbé is very well, I shall write to you again from Malicorne, where I expect to meet with Letters from you. I embrace the count, and as to you, my dear child, when should I finish, was I to go about to tell you all my thoughts, and all my tenderness for you?



L E T T E R CCCXXIX.

To the Same.

Malicorne, Saturday, 28 March, 1676.

I HAVE met with two of your Letters on the road, my dear, which have given me no small joy, as they give the agreeable proofs of your affectionate regard for my health, in so tenderly advising me in relation to it; in return for which, I assure you, that I see nothing to hinder the little Adhemar from living a century, at least. You mention the 15th of June, now we have reckoned the moons to the 11th of February, and find that it enters just two days upon the ninth month; that is fully sufficient. As to myself, the change of air, and the continuance of the fine weather have done me a great deal of good: if I could stay here a week or ten days, Madame de Lavardin, and her friendly care would complete the cure: but a thousand things call me to Paris, both on your account, and my son's. Do but think of our mischance, Jallard's marriage has hindered Virville from purchasing the guidonage: here are all our measures broken at once: is not this very droll, or rather very cruel? Madame de la Baume strikes from afar.

If I go to Bourbon, and you join me there, that will be my cure, and this winter I shall live upon the hopes of seeing you. Madame de

de Lavardin thinks there is very little in the *Highb-ness* of the Princess de Tarente, and that there is no comparison between Madame de Vaudemont, your friend, who is so far from any sovereignty, and the Princess Aurelle of Hesse, who has just left it, I shall now finish by another hand.

When I came here, Madame de Lavardin spoke to me of Mr Flechier's funeral oration. We read it together, and I ask Mr de Tulle a thousand pardons, but I really think it is better than his. I think it is more uniformly beautiful; I read it with astonishment, and was hardly able to comprehend how the same thing could be said in such a different manner: in short, I was quite charmed with it. The news you sent us from Messina was very entertaining and carried an air of authority with it on account of your near neighbourhood to it. What madness could possess these people to have such an aversion to the French, who are the politest and most engaging people in the world. Let me always share in your tragical histories, never hide any thing, for a state of suspense is worse than the most cruel certainty. Madame de Lavardin sends you a billet, the answer to which, I will deliver more carefully than that to Buffi. The way you take to write to each other is very droll*. You know, I suppose, that M. de Coetquen arrived at Paris, at the same time with M. de Chaulnes: the animosity that is between them, on a writ of complaint lately lodged by Coetquen against de Chaulnes, must furnish a fine scene, if the King would hear them together. I am likewise informed, that M. de Rohan has quitted the service, on not being

* See Letter LXVI. Vol. I. of the Letters of Buffi-Rabutin.

made a brigadier: so we shall see the fashion of volunteers will return again. Adieu, my dearest Countess, this is sufficient for to-day.



LETTER CCCXXX.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday, 8 April, 1676.

I AM dull and mortified, my dear child, on not being able to write all I would. I begin to be quite out of patience at this tedious delay. I am extremely well in health, the change of air has been of great service to me, but my hands cannot be persuaded to share in the recovery. I have seen all our friends, male and female. I keep my room, and observe your advice in making the care of my health my principal concern. The Chevalier (*de Grignan*) comes and chats with me till eleven o'clock: he is an amiable youth. I got so far the better of his modesty, as to engage him in an account of his campaign; when we both shed tears of remembrance to M. de Turenne. What think you of the marshal de Lorges? Is he not happy? Honours, riches, and a pretty wife! she was brought up as one destined to be in time, a great lady. Fortune is a pretty Goddess, but I cannot forgive her the manner she treats all us in.

Monfieur

MONSIEUR DE CORBINELLI.

I am just come in time, Madam, to relieve this trembling hand; but shall resign the pen to it again whenever it pleases. It was going to inform you of a droll speech of M. d'Armagnac's, There was a dispute concerning the places of the Princes and Dukes at the communion, which was thus regulated by his Majesty. Immediately after the Princes of the blood came, M. de Virmondois, and some of the Dukes; the rest of the Dukes and the Princes of Lorraine being dispensed with attending: upon this, M. d'Armagnac took upon him to expostulate with his Majesty on this disposition, but the King giving him to understand that he would have it so, *Sire*, replies d'Armagnac, *The Coalman is master at home* *. This was looked upon droll enough by every body, and I am persuaded you will think the same.

MADAME DE SÉVIGNÉ.

I do not like to employ secretaries that have more wit than myself. I am afraid to make them write all my nonsense. The *Little Body* was excellent on this account. I still design to go to Bourbon, and cannot but wonder at peoples endeavouring to dissuade me from it, notwithstanding it is the advice of all the physicians.

I was talking to d'Hacqueville yesterday, about your saying, that you would come and pay me a visit there. I need not tell you how

* *Le Charbonnier est le Maître chez lui.*

much I desire it should be so, nor how much I regret passing my life thus without you. It seems as if we had another in reserve, where we are to see each other continually, and give an unbounded loose to our tenderness and affection; but we are waiting the present, which is our all, and death closes the account: this thought is affecting. But notwithstanding the desire I have for your company, if you imagine the expence of the journey will be a means of preventing your coming here next winter, I would not have you think of it, I had rather be without seeing you so much longer, for I have no hopes of going to Grignan. The good Abbé will not go; he has a great deal of business here, and besides that is apprehensive of the climate. Now I find in turning over my treatise of ingratitude, that I can by no means think of leaving him at his age; and as I know a separation from me, would be like that of soul and body: I should never be easy from reproach if he should die in my absence. Therefore, consider whether the pleasure of being together for three weeks will prevent our spending the whole winter together; settle this in your mind, according to the plan and situation of your affairs, only remember, that my affection, and the miserable condition I have been in, call upon you to give me all the comfort in your power, and the greatest of all comforts is that of seeing you. If you could come back with me here from Bourbon, it would be excellent, we would pass our autumn at Livri; and in the winter, M. de Grignan might come and see us, and take you away with him in the spring. This would be the easiest way, the most natural, and the most desirable for me. Consider of all this well, there is no time to lose: I shall set out for Bourbon, or Vichi, the next month.

You

You enquire after my health, why, it is very good ; I eat, drink, and sleep well, but in moderation : I am come now to feed myself with my left hand ; I was the most laughable figure in my swaddling cloaths that could be ; as to writing, you see how that is with me. They say a great deal in praise of Vichi, and I fancy I shall like it better than Bourbon, for two reasons : first, because they say Madame de Montespan is to be at Bourbon. Secondly, because Vichi is the nearest to you ; so that if you should come, you will have a less fatiguing journey, and if the *Worthy* should change his mind, we shall be readier for Grignan..

The Chevalier de Mirabeau was telling us here, how greatly you was affected with the news of my illness, and that six hours uneasiness had altered you so, that you was hardly to be known. You may judge, my dear, how sensibly I am touched with those marks of your affection. I have seen the Dutchess of Sault here, she is extremely well made, and as gay as a bird : she is going into Dauphiné. Her husband seems melancholy, but that is attributed to his having left the service. It is said, and he begins to think so himself, that he ought not to have made a capital point of his being a lieutenant-general a year sooner, or later. I do but just touch upon these subjects, and stifle half my thoughts on account of my poor hand. The Princess de Tarente is expected here in a day or two. MADAME wrote to her very tenderly, calling her good aunt. About a week ago, Mr. de Vendôme said to the King, " That he hoped after the campaign was ended, his Majesty would permit him to go and take possession of the govern-

“ ment he had done him the honour to give him.”
 “ Sir, *replied the King*, when you know how to
 “ manage your own affairs, I shall give you the
 “ care of mine,” and so it stopt short.

Adieu, my dearest child, I take up
 the pen, and lay it down ten times in writing a Letter;
 so do not fear that I shall hurt my hand.



LETTER CCCXXI.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday, 10 April, 1676.

THE more I think on it, my
 dear, the more I am against your making me a
 visit only for a fortnight. If you come to Vichi or
 to Bourbon, it ought to be in order to come on hi-
 ther, and be with me, and we will pass the remain-
 der of the summer and the autumn there. You
 shall govern me, and Mr. de Grignan shall come
 and see you in the winter, and dispose of you in his
 turn as he thinks proper. It is thus you ought to
 visit a mother, it is thus you ought to comfort her
 after she has suffered a painful illness, and a thou-
 sand other incommodities, and lost the flattering
 imagination of being immortal. At present she be-
 gins to feel some little doubts, and is mortified to
 such a degree, as to believe that she may one day
 pass, like others, in the bark of Charon, and that
 she is not exempted from his jurisdiction. My son
 is going away, I am very melancholy upon it, and
 feel

feel a sensible grief from this separation. We see nothing at Paris, but equipages preparing for the campaign; the complaints of the necessity of parting from hence are greater than ordinary, but I believe none will stay behind any more now, than in other years. You see that my hand writing begins to return to its usual form: I reckon the cure of my hand chiefly to consist in that; it well knows that I will excuse it for some time from any other exercise. I cannot yet lift any thing with it; a spoon seems a ponderous machine. I am still forced to submit to such regulations as are very troublesome and mortifying; but I complain of nothing, since I write to you. The Dutchess de Sault visits me like one of my ancient friends; I seem to be agreeable to her. She came twice with Madame de Brissac. What a contrast is there between these two characters! the first of them would certainly please you. My hand desires to repose itself; I owe it this complaisance, for that it has had for me.

Continued by Monsieur DE SÉVIGNÉ.

* *Je vais partir de cette Ville,
Je m'en vais Mercredi, tout droit a Charleville :
Malgré le chagrin, qui m'attend.*

I did not think it proper to finish the parody of the stanza, because all my history is comprehended in three lines. You cannot conceive the joy it gives me, to see my mother so well recovered. I still insist on it, that you ought to come and see her at Bourbon; you may return hither

* I am leaving this town; I shall set out on Wednesday for Charleville, in spite of all the vexations that attend me.

with

with her, and stay here, till Mr. de Grignan returns to give a new lustre to your beauties, and make you appear in the Castilian language,

* *La gala del pueblo,
La flor del Abril.*

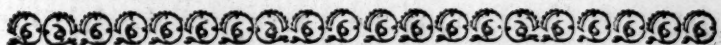
If you follow my advice, you will be happier than I am; you will see my mother, without feeling the pain of parting from her in two or three days, a pain that is usually accompanied with other uneasinesses easy to be imagined. I am still a Guidon, an eternal Guidon, a Guidon with a grey beard: what comforts me is, that all things in this world have an end, and there is no probability that this only is excepted from the general rule. Adieu, my dear sister; wish me a happy voyage: I fear the interested soul of Mr. de Grignan will forbid you to make so kind a wish.

Concluded by Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ.

Adieu, my dear; I embrace the Count, and conjure him to enter into my interests, and my tender sentiments.

* The pride of the village, the flower of April.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCCXXXII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday, 15 April, 1676.

I AM very melancholy, my dear, my poor lad has just left us, he has so many little social virtues that render him an agreeable companion, that were it only a neighbour, I should regret the loss of him. He desired me over and over again to tell you, that he forgot to take notice to you of the story of your Proteus, who was one time a capuchin, another time a galley-slave; it was highly pleasant. It is imagined that we are going to undertake the siege of Cambrai; this is so extraordinary a step, that every one thinks we have had intelligence with some one in the place. If we lose Philippsbourg, it will be very difficult to repair the breach, *rederemo*. But still we reason and make almanacks, all of which end with *the King's star will prevail*.

At length Marschal Bellefond has cut the thread that tied him here. Sanguin has purchased his place * for 55,000 livres, and a *brevet de retenue* of 350000. This is a fine settlement,

* Of Premier Maitre d'Hotel, or Lord Chamberlain to the King.

and

and an assurance of a *Cordonblue**. M. de Pomponne has been to pay me a very cordial visit. Our friends have exerted themselves to a wonder. I do not go abroad yet. It blows a wind at present that retards the cure of my hand, and yet I write better than I did, as you may see. I turn myself at night on my left side; I eat with my left hand: here is a deal of left work. I am resolved to go to Vichi; they have set me against Bourbon on account of it's air. The Marechal d'Etrées is for having me to go to Vichi; she says it is a delightful country. I have told you what I think of that affair, either resolve to return hither with me, or else do not come at all; for a fortnight will only disturb me with constant thoughts of a separation, and will be on the whole an expence equally foolish and useless. You know how dear the sight of you is to me; so act accordingly.

I wish you had finished the bargain about your estate; M. de Pomponne tells me it is erected into a marquisate. I desired him to make it a dukedom, he assured me he should gladly be employed in it, and would use all possible expedition in drawing up the patents. This is, however, a considerable step. I am delighted to hear the *Pichons* are so well. How does the little *tiny one*, or rather the *great big one* do? I love him dearly, for resolving to live in spite of Nature. But I cannot forget my little *girl*†, I fancy you will determine

* M. de Sanguin was not created a knight of the King's order at the promotion in 1683, but the Marquis de Livri his son, who was Premier Maître d'Hotel, was comprehended in that of 1724.

† Marie-Blanche d'Adhemar, born the 15 November 1670.
See Vol. I.

about putting her to St. Mary's, according to the resolutions you take this summer, all depends upon that. You seem entirely satisfied with the devotions of the Passion-Week, and the Jubilee: you was quite retired in your castle. As for me, my thoughts were not affected with any thing, I had no object to strike the sense: I eat meat till Good-Friday, and had only the comfort of being very distant from any occasions of committing sin. I told la Mousse you remembered him; and he advises you to make the most of your man of wit. Adieu, my dear child.

MONSIEUR DE CORBINELLI.

I always come at a lucky time to relieve this poor hand; she was just going to tell you the good Princess de Tarente has been here, and that she is so full of business, and so stunned with the notion of Paris, that she could not say any thing to her about your answer. We mutually regret the tranquility of the Rocks. But I am weary of acting the secretary, and so I will entertain you a little by myself.

Your good mother mentioned the project of Cambrai to you, but in a very superficial manner. This is what the politicians say of the affair. It is certain that our troops are all distributed to different parts; some are before Cambrai, others before Ypres, and others are sent towards Brussels, whither Vandrai has been dispatched. The design of this is, to amuse the allies, and to prevent them from forming a strong army by the junction of their several garrisons. But what is looked upon in the worst light, is sending a secretary

tary of state * to assemble the troops, and carry orders himself to all parts. M. de Crequi is at Cambrai; M. de Humieres is at Ypres, but as to the rest, their destination is as yet a secret in the King's breast. The Duke of Luxembourg has declared against us, and furnished the Imperialists with five or six thousand men: the Princes his brothers are of little consequences, that is, the Duke of Hanover †, and the Bishop of Osnabruck. We have demanded the Infanta of Bavaria ‡ for the Dauphin; but since her mother's § death, the King of Spain has demanded her likewise, and it is believed that he will have her, for the good Elector has a month's mind to the King of Poland's widow ||, who is sister to the Emperor (*Leopold*). If M. de Marseille could have parried his stroke, I should have said something to him.

The King has ordered the parliament to make out a commission for a counsellor of the high chamber, to repair to Rouen and examine Madame de Brinvilliers; for they will not have her brought hither to be examined, by reason that some of the gentlemen of the robe have some relation or connection with that unhappy wretch.

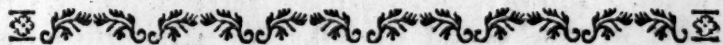
* Monsieur de Louvois.

† His late Majesty George I.

‡ Mary-Anne-Victoria of Bavaria, married in 1680 to Louis, Dauphin of France.

§ Henrietta Adelaide of Savoy, who died the 18 March, 1676.

|| Cleonora-Maria of Austria; widow to Michael Viesnoviski.



L E T T E R C C C X X X I I I .

To the Same.

Paris, Friday, 17 April, 1676.

METHINKS I do not write very badly, my dear, thank God for it, at least, I answer for the first two or three lines, for you must know that my hands, I mean my right hand, will give it's assistance to no other purpose than that of writing to you; I love it the better for it. If it is offered a spoon it desires to be excused, it shakes and spills every thing in it: offer it any thing else, it is the same thing, it refuses it flat and plain, and thinks that I am already sufficiently obliged to it. In fact, I require very little else of it: I am extraordinarily patient, and wait for relief from the warm weather and Vichi. Since I have been informed there is a pump there, and a bath; the clearness of the air, and the beauty of the country have determined me to set out as soon as possibly I can.

The King left Paris yesterday, but it is not absolutely known what siege he is going to undertake. I have seen M. de Pomponne, he desires me to make you a thousand compliments for him. I have been at Mademoiselle de Meris's, who has very pleasant and agreeable apartments, and extremely well furnished: there is no leaving her rooms they are so pleasing. The Villars are very dull upon the Marschal de Bellefond's absolute retreat.

treat. I have been abroad but three times; is not that as you would have it? My activity is quite over; ask Corbinelli, here he is.

MONSIEUR DE CORBINELLI.

Indeed, Madam, it is true, she is just what we would have her, and so compleatly altered, that she is rather the image of indolence than activity, unless when you and your affairs are in question. This refreshing calm is one of the best remedies she could have had; and she seems already to have a taste for indolence: as for me, who make that passion my deity; I rejoice at it, as a thing that must be of great service to this excellent mother. But stay, she interrupts me to dictate two or three *bons mots* of Madame de Cornuel's which made M. de Pomponne give into those bursts of laughter that you are so well acquainted with. Madame de Cornuel, seeing Madame de Lionne with some very large diamonds in her ears, said, and in hearing too, *To me these large diamonds look like bacon in a mouse-trap.*

The other day she was speaking of some young person of her acquaintance, and said, *That she thought she was with the dead, for she smelt very ill, and said nothing.*

Third *bon mot*. In speaking of the countess de Fiesque, she said, *That she preserved her beauty by being pickled in folly.* Besides an infinite number of others, which were spoken with so much indifference and chagrin together, that they were exceedingly entertaining.

I need

I need not tell you, I suppose, that Madame de Montespan set out yesterday at six o'clock in the morning, either for Clugni, or Maintenon, which of them, is a secret; but we all know that she is to return on Saturday to St. Germain, from whence she will go the latter end of the month to Nevers. till the season for the waters.

There is great talk of the siege of Condé, which is to be finished as soon as possible, in order to send the troops into Germany, and curb the insolence of the Imperialists, who cannot be brought to abandon Philipsburg. The chief affairs in Europe are on that side. We must all have the glory of the treaty of Munster; or at least, keep the empire from making any advantage of it. Not but that the charms of the Princess of Bavaria have a great part in our disputes, for all the Princes that are marriageable, pretend to her, and we shall one of these days see her the heroine of, at least, a dozen of Romans.

MADAME DE SÉVIGNÉ,

This has been a great relief to my hand, but I am sorry I have nothing left to tell you. Don't you think Madame de Cornuel admirable? Adieu, my dearest child, I love you with the most pure and perfect friendship, you are entirely worthy of it, and it is absolute vain-glory to boast of the value I have for you.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCCXXXV.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday, 24 April, 1676.

I AM still very much troubled with my hands. Old de Lorme would not have me set out till the end of May, but every body is going off, and the house that I thought to have had, is slip't through my hands : he is for my going to Bourbon, but that is mere cabal, and so I shall stick by my resolution of going to Vichi. If your affairs would have permitted you to have joined me there, and to have returned from thence and spent the autumn and part of the winter with me, and then for M. de Grignan to have come and taken you home with him, it would have been doing me a sensible pleasure : but I am willing to believe that you could not do it, as you did not seem to lend an ear to the proposal. If Mademoiselle de Meri was prepared for taking the water, I should have taken her with me with a great deal of pleasure ; as she may have told you, but Brayer will have her take some cooling physick first.

Let me have a few kind remembrances for Madame de Villars, she has a great esteem for you, and shews an inexpressible tenderness and concern for me. Her husband is going ambassador to Savoy, whither his wife will speedily follow

follow him. We have no news from Condé, unless of the loss of eight or ten men, and Mareschal d'Humieres having had his hat shot through: God grant this may be the worst we may have. I have seen M. de Perrier, who told me, that you heard the news of my being seized with the rheumatism while you was at cards, and that it made you shed tears: and can I withhold mine at such marks of your love and tenderness? All Provence was in anxiety for my health, on account of the uneasiness it gave you. Is it possible to love too much a child by whom one is so beloved? But to tell you the truth, I do not think that I am very ungrateful.

Adieu, my dearest and ever loved child, your Letters are very agreeable to me; till you can give me a more substantial pleasure.



L E T T E R CCCXXXVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday, 29 April, 1676.

I MUST begin by telling you that Condé was taken by storm on Saturday night. This news at first makes one's heart beat; it was feared that this victory had cost us too dear, but it does not prove so; we have lost some soldiers, but none of any note; this may be reckoned a complete happiness. Laré, the son of Mr. Lenet, who was killed in Candia, or his brother is dangerously wounded.

wounded. You see how soon our old heroes are forgot.

Madame de Brinvilliers is not so much at her ease as I; she is in prison. She endeavours to pass her time there as pleasantly as she can, and desired yesterday to play at Piquet, because she was very dull. They have found her confession: she informs us, that at the age of seven years she ceased to be a virgin, and that she had ever since went on at the same rate; that she had poisoned her father, her brothers, one of her children, and herself; but the last was only to make trial of an antidote. Medea had less of this guilty skill. She has owned this confession to be her own writing: it was an unaccountable folly; but she says, she was in a high fever when she writ it; that it is a frenzy, an extravagance, which does not deserve to be read seriously.

The Queen has been twice at the Carmelites with Madame de Montespan. This lady last mentioned had a fancy to make a lottery; she got together a collection of every thing that could gratify the nuns; this made great diversion in the convent. She talked a great while with * Louise, a sister of the convent, called la Misericorde; she asked her, whether it was true that she was so perfectly easy there, as it had been generally reported? She

* It is probable, that more than mere curiosity induced Madame de Montespan, who perhaps had thoughts of a like retirement, to make so pressing an enquiry of this beautiful nun, who seems to have retired on a like motive, whether she found a real satisfaction from her religious retreat.

replied,

replied, I am not only easy, but I am perfectly happy in this retirement. She had a great deal of discourse with her about the Prince's brother; and asked her whether she had no message to send him, and what she should say to him from her? The fair recluse replied with the most agreeable air, and in the sweetest accent that can be imagined, Whatever you please; but let me beg the favour of you to express it with all the grace, all the wit, and all the modesty, you know so well how to give it. I tell you the simple fact, just as it passed, without the least paraphrase.

You congratulate me upon the hopes I have of finding Madame de Brissac at Vichi, and you ask me, what entertainment I can promise myself from her? I have made choice of her, my dear, to teach me plainness and sincerity in conversation. If I had had my son with me the other day, whom I might have employed as my secretary, I would have sent you a sketch of the superficial conversation she engaged us in, in this room.

You say, my dear, you fancy you have taken the remedies prescribed to you; you are very happy: I wish I could bleed in imagination; they say it is a necessary preparation in order to my drinking the waters.

To Monsieur DE GRIGNAN.

I Affure you, my dear Count, that I should be a thousand times more pleased with the favour you mention to me, than with that of his
 Vol. IV. N Majesty.

Majesty. I believe you begin to be of my opinion, and that you comprehend the extreme desire I have to see your wife, without coming to take upon me the management of your family, as your coal-man does; I believe, on the contrary, that you are the chief of the coal-men, and that no man can have the preference to you under any title whatsoever. But be generous, and when she has acted the part of a good wife a little longer, bring her to me, and bid her act that of a good daughter. It is thus that a man of honour acquits himself of his devoirs; and this is the only means to restore me to my health, and to my life.

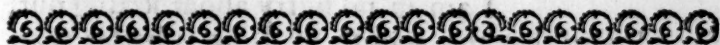
How pleasant you are in speaking still of Cambrai. We shall have taken another town before you will have heard of the taking of Condé. What think you of the favour fortune has done us, in bringing our friend the Turk into Hungary? Corbinelli is much pleased with it: I shall have a warm dispute with him upon it.

I return to you, my dear, and embrace you in the most affectionate manner. Here is Mr. de Coulanges, who will tell you in what manner Madame de Brinvilliers has endeavoured to destroy herself.

Continued by Mr. DE COULANGES.

She thrust in a truncheon, not into her eye, not into her ear, not into her mouth; I leave you to guess where. The wound was so very deep, that she would certainly have died, if they had not come in time to her assistance. I am very well pleased, that the poems I sent were agreeable
to

to you. I expect with impatience the return of Mr. de Bandol, to know what reception he gave to the poem, intitled, Tobit. He must certainly have had the address to impart it to you, without offence to the purity of a soul, which you have so newly washed in the salutary streams of the jubilee. Your mother is going to Vichi : I shall not follow her thither because my health has been a little better for some time. I believe I shall not go to Lyons : so that you must come to Paris, and bring your fine face along with you, if you expect a kiss from me. I salute Mr. de Grignan, and acquaint him, that M. de Luffan has gained his suit, that he may thank me for it, if he thinks proper.



L E T T E R CCCXXXVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday, 1 May, 1676.

I BEGIN my Letter by returning a thousand thanks to Mr. de Grignan for the pretty night gown he has sent me, I never in my life saw any thing better fancied ; I am going to have it made up for the winter, to keep my corner in your chamber, I often think as well as you, of the evenings we passed together last winter ; but pray what should hinder us passing the same this, if you are not against it ? Every creature here, is struck with amazement at your picture ; it is, without doubt, greatly improved, the colours are grown stronger, and — in short, it is now a finished

piece: if you suspect my veracity, pr'ythee come and see it yourself.

There has been a piece of news handed about these two or three days past, of which every one comes to enquire of me the truth. They say, that Mr. de Grignan has orders to turn the Vice-Legate neck and shoulders out of Avignon: I shall not believe a syllable of it till I hear it from you. The Grignans will have the honour of being the first excommunicated, if this noble war should begin; for the Abbé Grignan here, has had orders from his Majesty to forbid the Bishops paying any visits to the Nuncio.

I am in no hurry about setting out, for I know that the month of June is better than that of May for drinking the waters in, and so I shall begin my journey about the eleventh of next month. Madame de Montespan is set out for Bourbon: Madame de Thianges accompanies her as far as Nevers, where she is to be met by the Duke and Dutchess of that place. My son writes me word, they are going to besiege Bouchain with part of the army, while the King with the main body is to wait for the Prince of Orange, and give him battle. The Chevalier d'Humieres has been out of the bastile this week; this he owes to his brother. Nothing is talked of here, at present, but the transactions and behaviour of Madame de Brinvilliers: Could one ever have thought of her forgetting the murder of her father at confession? And then the peccadilloes that she was afraid of forgetting were admirable. She was in love, it seems, with this same Sainte-Croix, she wanted to marry him, and for that purpose gave her husband poison two or three

three different times. Sainte-Croix, who did not care to have a wife as wicked as himself, gave the good man a dose of counter poison; so that after being bandied about between them, sometimes poisoned, sometimes unpoisoned again; he at last is actually making intercession for his dear Kib, oh! there is no end of some people's follies!

I went to Vincennes yesterday with the Villars': his excellency sets out to morrow for Savoy, and desired me to kiss your left hand for him. These same ladies * love you exceedingly: pray make mention of them when you write to me, by way of reward for their kindness. Adieu, my dear and ever-loving girl, I shall say nothing more to you to-day.



LETTER CCCXXXVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday, 4 May, 1676.

SO it is you then, daughter, that refuse coming to pass the summer with me, and not Mr. de Grignan. As you are so very reasonable a person, and that I cannot but think that you have some desire to see me, you must certainly have seen some impossibilities in the proposal I made to you that escaped me: but you may rest assured, that I

* Mesdames de Villars, and Sainte-Geran,

should come to Grignan, had not the good Abbé, who regulates my steps, some affairs on his hands that would oblige him to return again very speedily, and of which mine make a part. It was therefore a natural proposal on my side, for to see you for a fortnight only at Vichi, would be only damping all my joy with sadness.

Pray tell me sincerely your reasons and views for the next winter, for I can never think that you have an intention of letting it go by, without affording me the joy and comfort of embracing you. I will let you know the day that I set out, and will inclose a direction for writing to me. I have made choice of Madame de Brissac, to learn in her company an example of uprightness and sincerity.

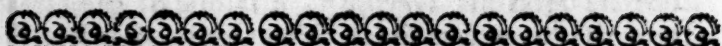
My good child, you fancy you have taken physic! I wish I could fancy that I have been bled! for they say, that operation is absolutely necessary before taking the waters. You see I write tolerably well: I imagine that my hands will soon be well, but I feel myself so full of humours by the continual sweats I am subject to, that I cannot but think this same spongy carcase of mine wants a good squeezing. The fear of having a second time in my life the amusement of a rheumatism, would make me take a much longer journey than from here to Vichi.

You ask me, what I do? Why I take the air very frequently; one day I go to the horse-races with Villars; at another time I pay a visit to the Fauxbourgs, and then I rest a-while. I have been to Mignard's, he has painted Mr. de Turenne

Turenne upon his *Magpye* *, it is one of the finest things that ever was seen. The Cardinal de Bouillon came to me, and desired that if I was at leisure I would go and see this master-piece: Mignard's imagination has done even more than his pencil.

I have had another two hour's conversation with M. du Perrier, I have never done with the subject of Provence: I made him tell me a thousand things relating to you, especially about your playing, and your operas, where you ruminate so finely. I made him tell me all the *Squibs* of the procurators, and in what manner you restored peace to Provence, and about the first president, and la Tour d'Aigues; and a thousand other things. In short, I have refreshed my memory with every thing that a week's fever had made me forget, for you know that I have been subject to so many wanderings, that my poor brain has made a mere hotch-potch of truths and falsehoods.

* A War-horse of Mr. de Turenne's, the same that he rode on the day that he was killed.



LETTER CCCXXXIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday, 6 May, 1676.

MY heart is just broken about my poor grand-daughter*, she is inconsolable at being parted from you, and confined, as you say, in prison: I am astonished how I had the courage to place you there, but the thoughts of seeing you frequently and taking you from thence when I would, made me determine upon this piece of barbarity, which was then thought a prudent action, as being a thing requisite to your education. In short, we must follow the destinations of Providence, which disposes of us as it pleases. Madame de Gué, the nun, is going to Chelles, she carries a very handsome allowance in with her, that she may want for nothing, but I fancy that she will change her station again, unless the hand of some young apothecary†, who serves the abbey, prevails on her, to fix her residence there, I saw him yesterday. My dear child, he is a young fellow of five and twenty, with a face like an angel, and eyes like Madame de Mazarin, teeth like ivory, and the rest of his person like—like—*Rinaldo*: fine flowing black locks

* She was lately placed in the convent of the nuns of St. Mary d'Aix. See Letter of the 15th of April.

† *Amonio*.

adorn

adorn the prettiest head you would wish to see; he is an Italian, and speaks Italian as you may suppose. He was at Rome till he was turned of twenty, after that he made several voyages. Mr. de Nevers and the Dutcheſs brought him over to France, and Mr. de Briſſac, by way of making him eaſy, has ſet him down in the very middle of the charming abbey of Chelleé, of which Madame de Briſſac his ſiſter is abbeſs. He has a phyſic garden in the convent, but truſt me, he has very little of a *Lamporechio* * in him. I fancy moſt of the young nuns will like him, and conſult him in all their little diſorders, but I would take the ſacrament that he will not cure one of them, but by the rules of Hypocrates. Mad. de Coulanges, who is juſt come from Chelles, thinks of him as I do. In ſhort, all the handſome muſicians at *Thoulangeon's* † are mere frights to him. You cannot think how this little adventure has delighted us.

I muſt talk with you about the little Marquis de Grignan; I beſeech you not to be under any apprehenſion about his fearfulneſs. Remember that the lovely Marquis ‡ uſed to tremble and quake till he was twelve years old, and that la Troche, when young, was ſo terrified at the leaſt thing, that his mother would not bear to have him in her ſight; and yet you ſee how much they have diſtinguiſhed themſelves ſince: ſo let that com-

* See La Fontaine's Tale of *Mazet de Lamporechio*.

† Elder brother to the Count de Gramont, a remarkable good companion.

‡ Mr. de la Châtre.

fort you. These kind of fears are the mere effects of childhood, and when they grow up, instead of being afraid of raw-head and bloody bones, they are afraid of being found to know fear, they are afraid of being less esteemed than others, and that is enough to make them brave, and kill their thousands and ten thousands, let me then once again beg you to make yourself easy on that head.

As to his shape, it is another matter, I would advise you to put him into breeches, and then you will see better how his legs go on, and whether they are strutted in their growth or not. You must let him have room to stir himself, and unfold his little members: you must put him on a pretty tight vest, which will confine his shape.—But I shall receive some farther instructions on this head which I will not fail to transmit to you. It would be a fine thing indeed, to see a Grignan with a bad shape! Don't you remember how pretty he was in his swaddling-cloaths? I am no less uneasy than yourself about this alteration.

I was dreaming when I told you that Madame de Thianges was gone to accompany her sister part of the way, there was only Madame la Maréchal de Rocheforte, and the Marchioness de la Valliere, and they saw her as far as Eflre. She is now quite alone, and what is more, will meet with no body at Nevers. If she had had a mind to have taken all the ladies at the court with her, she had nothing to do but to speak. But let us have a word about *the Friend*: she is still more triumphant than her we have been speaking of, every thing is subject to her will: she is in all the pomp
of

of a favourite, and I believe in my conscience laughs very heartily at the parade. There is no good judging at present how matters stand between her and her female friend.

The town is full of nothing but la Brinvilliers. Caumartin made a very foolish speech about the truncheon that she endeavoured to kill herself with, but without success. *It was*, said he, *just like Mithridates*. You know how she was used to poison, I need not conduct you farther into the application.

I have been at the opera with Mad. de Coulanges, Mad. d'Heudicourt, Mr. de Coulanges, the abbé de Grignan, and Corbinelli. Oh! there are some admirable things in this opera. The scenery is beyond all you can imagine, the dresses are superb, and there are some passages amazingly beautiful; there is a scene of sleep, and dreams, the invention of which is surprising. The symphony consists entirely of Basses, and the sounds are so lulling, that we admire *Baptist* more than ever. But *Atys* is played by the same person who played the *Fury* and the *Muse*; so that we always think we see the same droll characters in *Atys*. There are five or six new men dancers that are admirable, and that is enough to carry me thither, and yet upon the whole, the town seems to like *Alcestes* better; but you shall judge for yourself, for you will certainly come hither if you have any love for me, notwithstanding your little curiosity.

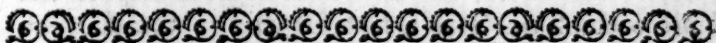
To be sure it is a fine thing not to have seen Trianon, and can one after that propose to you the seeing the Pont de Garde?

The Countess de Fiesque was insisting upon it the other day to Madame de Cornuel, that Combourg was no fool, upon which Madame de Cornuel answers her, *My dear Countess, you are just like people who have eaten garlick.* Was not that droll? Mr. de Pomponne has written to me to desire me, not to forget to write down all Madame de Cornuel's *bons mots*.

We shall set out on Wednesday, I shall not go through Fontainebleau, on account of the grief I had when I parted from you there. I have no desire of returning thither, unless you go with me. I fancy our correspondence will be a little interrupted now, which gives me no little uneasiness, for your Letters are my greatest amusement, and you write like—like—yourself. My dear, how I pity you for being obliged to take a nasty medicine blacker than ever! My little powder of antimony is the prettiest thing in the world, but by the way I must tell you, that I disobey my good Mr. de Lorme a little, for he would send me to Bourbon, but the experience of a thousand people who have been in my way, the fine air, the little company, and all together determine me to go to Vichi. The good d'Escars goes with me to my great joy. My hands will not shut yet, and I have a pain in my knees and shoulders; in short, I am so full of ferocities, as they are called, that I must absolutely have this marsh of mine drained, which cannot be done otherwise than by drinking warm challybeate-water, and purging, and then I think I shall do pretty well.

The journey to Aigues-Mortes was very pretty, and you was absolutely a lazy creature
not

net to be of the party. I have a very good opinion of your conversations with the abbé de la Vergne, so long as you have nothing to do with the bishop of Marseilles. Madame de Brevai's devotion is a fine farce, I'll let you hear more about her from Vichi; the *Caonoine* * has the direction of her conscience at present, and she, I'm persuaded, will tell me every thing. I have been bled this morning; a curious piece of news truly! Well! but I am now quite ready to set out.



* L E T T E R CCCXL.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday, 8 May, 1676.

I SHALL set out next Monday, my dear: the Chevalier du Buons brings you a fan which I think vastly pretty. Madame de Vins has gained a great part of her cause, in spite of Mr. de Emboële, who signalized himself in his opposition to her. The good Princess (*de Tarente*) is violently enraged with Mr. d'Ormesson, who has the management of Mr. de la Tremoille's affairs, because he will not allow her a certain addition to the prejudice of the former creditors. She was crying very heartily to me just now, and told me at the same time how rudely she was treated by Madame de Monac. But MADAME seems very fond of the

* Madame de Longueval, cannoneess of the abbey St. Mary d'Aix. She was sister to the Mareschalleffs d'Etrées, and Mr. de Manicamp.

good aunt, she sputters out German with her finely, which does not a little vex Monaiio.

My God ! can it be true that la Simiane is going to be parted from her husband, on account of his gallantries ? What a piece of folly ! I should have advised her rather to have paid him in his own coin. I am told that she is coming hither, and that she is going to Brittany : Is all this true ? I'll take my leave of you for this time, my dear, as this is not the day for our great dispatches. This post of our's is a hateful thing : the Letters are in the town, and yet they will not give them out till to-morrow ; so that one has two to answer at a time.

I have forgot to tell you that I am so well that I have been bled, and that nothing now stops me from setting out.



LETTER CCCXLI.

To the Same.

Paris, Sunday evening, 10 May, 1676.

I SHALL fet out to-morrow morning by break of day, and this evening give a supper to Madame de Coulanges, and her husband ; to Mr. de la Trouffe, Mademoiselle de Mongeron, and Corbinelli ; who are all to come and take their leaves of me, and eat a pidgeon pye. The good
d'Escars

d'Escars goes with me, and as the *Worthy* finds that he may trust my health in her hands; he has very prudently spared himself the fatigue of the journey, and wait my return here, where he has a thousand affairs that require his presence: he will be very impatient till my return, for let me tell you, that this separation, trifling as it is, costs him a good deal, and I am under some apprehensions about his health: the heart-ach is no good thing for old people, I shall therefore do all in my power to make my return as speedy as possible, since it is the only time in my life that I have had an opportunity of doing any thing to shew my gratitude for all his friendships, by sacrificing to him the very thoughts of going to Grignan. Here now is exactly one of those cases in which one's love must give way to one's gratitude.

You will be entitled to five or six hundred pistoles from our uncle de Sévigné's legacy *, I wish you had them ready against the winter, for I but too well know the inconveniences you must be driven to by the great expences you are obliged to be at, and therefore shall not urge the journey to Paris, persuaded that you love me enough to wish to be with me at any rate. You know likewise my sentiments on that head, and how wretched my life appears to me while deprived of the sight of one I so dearly love, &c. &c. It would be a provoking thing if Mr. de Grignan should be obliged to pass the summer at Aix, and a great expence besides, if it was only on account of the play, which makes a very considerable article at your house.

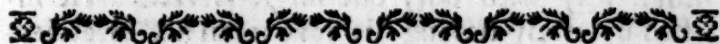
* See Letter of 22 March.

You

You tell me you have found it necessary to be bled, the trembling hand of your young surgeon made me tremble. The prince said one day to a new surgeon, Shall you not tremble when you are going to bleed me? Faith, Sir, replied the man, your highness has most reason to tremble: the man was in the right. So you have left off your coffee; Mademoiselle de Meri has likewise driven it from her house in a shameful manner. After such disgraces, who would ever depend upon fortune? I am persuaded that those things which heat, do not keep their ground so long as cooling things: I must return to them, for my part, at least, and indeed all my disorders have arisen from an inward heat, so that after that has been a little consumed by the waters of Vichi, I am to return to a cooling regimen of fruits, fallads, &c. &c. Let me advise you to follow the same method, rather than burn yourself up as you do. I request this favour of you for the sake of your own life, who can enjoy no satisfaction if you are not well.

I am now going to bed, my dear child, my little party is gone. Mesdames de Pomponne, de Vins, de Villars, and de St. Geran, were here, I embraced them all for you. I shall set out to-morrow morning at five o'clock: I shall write to you from all the places through which I pass. I embrace you with all my heart; I am sorry this expression is so much prostituted, for it is an admirable one to explain my manner of loving you.

LETTER



L E T T E R CCCXLII.

To the Same.

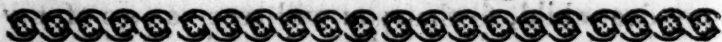
Montargis, Tuesday, 12 May, 1676.

I WROTE to you last night, my dear child, so that you will receive two of my Letters by the same post, and if after reading the first, you should chance to say, I wish I had another, there it will be for you; and you may say, that I am at Montargis with the good d'Escars, in perfect health, excepting hands and knees.

You know the road hither, I avoided Fontainebleau, for I am determined not to see it till I go to meet you there. I lay at *Courance* where I should have taken a fine walk if I had not been a poor wetted hen. I may say *wetted*, in the strict sense of the word, for I sweat all day long; I still continue to wear my hare skins, for the refreshing coolness of the morning that gives life to every other creature, appears to me like the frosts of December; so that I had rather be too hot for ten hours together, than too cold for half an hour. What think you of these pretty reliëts of the rheumatism? Do not you think I stand in need of the hot waters? Be it as it will, here I am in the way, ay, and on your way too. Madame d'Escars and I talk of you incessantly! but alas! our good Abbé! Do you know that I am continually apprehensive of his falling ill? Do you know too, how I have left him?

him? why with only one single servant. He insisted upon my having his coachman and Beaulieu, with two of his horses to make me a set. I see no way of getting out of his debt, but by downright ingratitude.

Adieu, my dear. Alas! what avails it that I am drawing nearer to you? I pity you that you have not me at Paris, to send you some news of Brinvilliers.



L E T T E R CCCXLIII.

To the Same.

Nevers, Friday, 15 May, 1676.

I AM in a place here which would tempt one to write to you whether one would or not; you may judge then how it is, considering my disposition. The weather is admirable, this violent heat is gone off without a storm, I have no more of those critical affairs that I was speaking to you of; the country is very fine, and I find our river Loire as beautiful here, as at Orleans: it is a great satisfaction to meet with an old acquaintance upon the road. I have brought my large coach with me, so that we are quite at our ease, and enjoy the fine prospects which rise upon us every instant; all that vexes me is, that the roads will be very indifferent in the winter, which will fatigue you in your journey.

We

We follow close upon the heels of Madame de Montespan, and inform ourselves at every place, how she looked, how she eat, how she drank, and how she slept. She is in a calash with eight horses, with the little Thianges with her, another coach behind with the same number of horses, with six of her women in it : she has two sumpters, six mules, and ten or twelve men on horseback, without reckoning her officers ; her whole train consisted of about five and forty persons. She always finds her apartment and bed ready ; she eats very heartily and goes to bed directly. She was here at the castle when Mr. de Nevers came to give his orders, but did not stay to receive her. She gives away a great deal in charity, and with a very good grace. She receives a courier from the army every day ; she is now at Bourbon. The princess of Tarente who knows all the rest, will inform me, and I shall take care to communicate it to you. Have I told you that that same favourite of the King of Denmark, who was so romantickly enamoured of the princess, is in prison, and is to be tried ? He had only a trifling design, it seems, of dethroning his master and benefactor, and getting himself proclaimed king. You find this man had no mean way of thinking. Mr. de Pomponne was talking to me of him the other day, as of another Cromwell. Let me tell you, my dear child, that I find I shall not be able to live long without paying another visit to your castle with all its circumstances and dependances ; I feed this pleasing hope, and wish the prospect was a little less remote. Adieu, my dearest, I am certain that I shall write to you from Moulins, where I hope to meet with those Letters you have by this time sent me to Paris. I am in an utter ignorance of all kind of news : what relates to the war gives me most concern

cern and vexation, and is but a bad companion for the waters; but what can one do when one has any body at the army? at that rate one may stay till the month of January. I read while I am in the coach a little history of the Vizirs, and the intrigues of the Seraglio, which is amusing enough; it is a book that is quite in fashion.

Good-night, my lovely one. I salute Grignan, and a thousand good wishes to la Garde.



L E T T E R CCCXLIV.

To the Same.

*From Moulins at the convent of the visitation, in the room in which my grand-mother * died. Sunday 17 May 1676 after vespers, with two little girls from Valençai at my side.*

I ARRIVED here, my dear, last night, after six days of a very agreeable journey. Madame Fouquet, with her brother-in-law, and his son, came to meet me, and have taken me to their house to lodge. I dined here to-day, and to-morrow set out for Vichi. I found the maufo-

* Jeanne François Frémiot, baronness of Chantal, foundress of the order of the visitation. Pope Bouldut the XIV. lately honoured with the title of *The blessed mother of Chantal*, by a bull dated 13 Nov. 1751.

leum very beautiful *. The good Abbé would have been charmed to have seen it. The little girls here are very amiable and pretty, they remember to have heard you fetch some very deep sighs in this church, I believe that I had some part in them, at least I am sure, that I fetched some very sorrowful ones much about that time. Is it true that Mad. de Guenegaud said to you, sigh, madam, sigh? I have accustomed this place to the sighs that are brought from Paris. I admire you greatly for having thought of a match for your brother, you have hit the thing on the right side, and I have a great esteem for the negociation. I shall follow this method at my return to Paris, and so may write to d'Hacqueville. You fancy, it seems, that you was not afflicted at my illness; ah, my dear child, how could you help it! you was, in truth, in more fright than I was in danger: as my two and twenty days fever was only occasioned by pain, it gave no body any apprehensions. As to my ravings, they only proceeded from want of proper nourishment, for I could swallow nothing but a little broth; besides there are some people light-headed all the time of a fever. Your brother has remembered the nonsense I used to talk, and makes me ready to die with laughing at the repetition; he will let you know them all when he sees you, and you will laugh as heartily as I did. So let me desire you to make yourself easy, my dear, for you have had but too much uneasiness already on my account.

* The superb monument which Marie Felicis des Ursins had erected in the church of the visitation at Moulins, to the memory of her husband Henry duke of Montmorenci, who was beheaded at Toulouse the 30th of October 1731 by an order of the parliament of Toulouse.

Mr.

Mr. de la Garde must certainly have had very substantial reasons to oblige him to harness himself with another, I thought him quite free and roving up and down the field of life, and here I find he has put his neck under the yoke as well as others.

Madame de Montespan is at Bourbon, where Mr. de la Valliere had given orders for her to be addressed, by a deputation from all the towns in his government, but she declined the compliment. She does a great deal of charity, and receives every one with all imaginable politeness. Mr. Fouquet and his niece who were drinking the waters at Bourbon, went to pay her a visit, and she talked for near an hour with him upon some very new matters. Madame Fouquet went the next day, and was received with great sweetness and affability, and Mad. de Montespan listened to her, seemingly with compassion. God inspired Madame Fouquet with every thing in the world that could be best said on the occasion. In short, without pretending to any absolute promise; she set forth the horrors of her condition, and the confidence she had in her goodness in terms that greatly affected me in the recital, as I am sure they would have done you.

Mr. de Montespan's son * is now at Madame de Fouquet's in the country. He is about ten years old, is handsome and sprightly; his father at his return to Paris, left him with the Mesdames de Fouquet. The good d'Escars is very well, and

* Lewis-Anthony de Pordaille afterwards duke of Antin.

is extremely kind and careful of me. Pray relate to me the forceries of Madame de Rus.

Adieu, my dear, I embrace you a thousand times, and love you as one should love what is dearest to one upon earth.



L E T T E R CCCXLV.

To the Same.

Vichi, Tuesday, 19 May, 1676.

I BEGIN to write to you to-day: my Letter may go when it can, but I am resolved to have a little chat with you.

I got here last night, Madame de Brissac with her Canoness * Madame de St. Herem and two or three others came to receive me on the banks of the pretty river Allier, I fancy that if search was to be made one might find some of the Arcadian family on these banks. Mr. de St. Herem, Mr. de la Fayette, the abbé Dorat, Planci, and some more of them followed in another coach, and on horseback. I was received with much joy. Madame de Brissac carried me hence to supper with her; and I think I can already see that the Canoness has the good dutchess's fast hold by—you see where I put my hand, don't you? I have rested myself to-day, and to-morrow I begin to drink.

* Madame de Langueval.

Mr.

Mr. de St. Herem came this morning to take me to mass, and from thence to dinner with him; Madame de Brissac was of the party, and the company played; for my part, I can't bear the fatigue of cards. We went a walking this evening in one of the sweetest places in the world, and at seven o'clock the poor *wet hen* * took her chicken, chatted a little with her sweet little girl, and so forth. I am very well pleased that I had not our *Worthy* with us here, he would have made but an indifferent figure; when one does not drink, this place is tiresome; it is a confinement that is far from being agreeable, and less so to him than to any other.

There is news here, that we have taken Bouchain as luckily as Condé, and that notwithstanding the prince of Orange's feints, he will certainly attempt nothing. The good St. Geran has sent me her compliments from Palisse. I have entreated them all not to mention a word to me about the distance there is betwixt this and Lyons; it makes me uneasy,

I wait for your Letters here with great impatience, and when I am absent from you, my dear, my sole joy is writing to you, and should even the physicians, at whom by the bye I laugh in my sleeve, forbid me writing to you, I should in my turn forbid them to eat or drink, or breathe, to see how they would relish that regimen.

Let me hear some news about my little girl, and if she is pretty well reconciled to her

* Meaning herself.

convent yet, let me know likewise if she is to return to Paris this winter: I must own that if by some unforeseen accident I should be deprived of the pleasure of seeing you, it would make me half mad. That same word *Plague*, that I find in your Letter, makes me tremble. I should be very apprehensive of a disorder of that kind in such a climate as Provence. I beseech the Almighty to avert such a scourge from every place of your residence. What an unhappiness is it that we are doomed to pass our days at such a distance from each other, when our hearts are so nearly allied in tenderness.

Wednesday 20th.

Well, I have taken the waters this morning, my dear; ah, they are horridly disagreeable! I called on the *Cannoness*; she does not lodge with Madame de Brissac. The company go at six o'clock to the spring, there we all assemble, and drink, and make wry faces; for only figure to yourself that they are boiling hot, and have a very nauseous taste of sulphur. We walk backwards and forwards, we chat, we talk, we go to mass, we work off the waters, and every one tells, without the least hesitation, in what manner they go off: and so the time passes till noon: then we go to dinner, and after dinner, a visiting. This has been my day to see company. Madame de Brissac played at Ombre with St. Herem, and Planci: the *Cannoness* and myself read Ariosto, she is very fond of Italian, and thinks me a tolerable good companion. There are two or three young ladies who play upon the flute, and dance a Bourée very prettily: but to finish my account; at five o'clock we take a walk

in a delightful country; at seven we eat a light supper, and at ten retire to rest. So now you know as much of the matter as myself.

I find my waters agree very well with me; I drank a dozen glasses, they purged me a little, which is all that is required of them. I shall write to you every evening, and my Letters will go off when it pleases a certain little post-boy to call for them, who brings the Letters and sets out a quarter of an hour afterwards. Mine shall be always ready for him.

The Abbé Bayard is just come from his pretty house to pay me a visit. He is the *Druid Adamas* of this country.

Thursday, 21.

Our little dirty post-boy is just arrived, but has brought me no Letters from you. I have one from Coulanges, one from honest d'Hacqueville, and one from the princess of Tarente, who is at Bourbon. They have allowed her only to make her court for a quarter of an hour, so that her affairs will go swimmingly on; she wishes for me at Paris, but I think myself very well where I am.

My waters have done me a great deal of good to-day. Madame de Brissac has had the cholic to-day; she lay in bed, looked very handsome, and was dressed in a manner fit to make conquests; oh, I wish you had but seen how prettily she managed her pains, and her eyes, and her arms, and her cries, with her hands lying on the quilt;
and

and the sympathy she expected from all the bystanders. I was so taken up with this scene, and thought it so excellent, that the stupid posture I stood in did me, I believe, no little credit with her, as it seemed as if I was petrified with sorrow for her sufferings; and only think that this fine scene was opened purposely for the abbé Bayard, St. Herem, Montjon, and Planci. In truth, child, when I think on the way, that you carry off your illnesses, I must look upon you as a downright ignoramus; the calmness that sits upon your sweet face! in short, what a difference! I cannot but smile at the comparison.

As to myself, I eat my soupe with my left hand by way of novelty. They write me word about all the good fortune of Bouchain, and that the King is to return soon; I suppose his majesty will hardly come by himself. You was speaking to me the other day about Courtin, he is set out for England, so that I suppose his companion has now nothing more to do than to adore his fair one, you know who, without envy and without a rival.



LETTER CCCXLVI.

To the Same.

Vichi, Sunday, 24 May, 1676.

I AM really enchanted when I receive your Letters; they are so delightfully pleasing, that I cannot bear the thoughts of enjoying the pleasure of reading them alone; but be under no apprehension, I shall commit no folly: I have shewn Bayard a line or two, and another to the *Cannoness*; ah, that same *Cannoness* would suit you to a tittle! let me assure you that every one is delighted with your manner of writing. I only shew so much as is proper, and you may be sure that I keep the Letter so much in my own power, that no body can see any thing that I would not have seen, by peeping over my shoulders. I have wrote to you several times, both upon the road and from hence. You will have seen all that I say, all that I do, and all that I think, and even the conformity of our opinions in relation to the marriage of M. de la Garde. I cannot but admire how much our understandings are the dupes to our hearts, and the plausible reasons we find to defend a change of sentiments. That of the Coadjutor's is, I think, admirable, but the manner in which you tell it, is still more so: I have always a strong inclination to laugh when you write me any thing about the honest man du Parc, I think nothing can be

be more diverting than to see him persuading himself that he alone can work miracles, though, as you say, the greatest miracle would be to persuade you of the truth of it.

I am very glad that my dear little girl is gay and contented, I was uneasy lest her little heart should have been sad. It is certain that the journey from hence to Grignan is no great matter; but then you cannot persuade me, my dear, that that from Grignan to Lyons is such a trifle, it is a very fatiguing one, and I should be very sorry that you attempted it, to go back again directly: I am stedfast in my opinion, you see: was you one of those people that are to be easily biassed; and carried away here and there as others pleased; why, I might have had some hopes of bringing you along with me, but you are of a very different stamp, and therefore I am persuaded that I have no complaisance of that kind to expect from you, and therefore I rest satisfied that you should keep your love and your money to bring you up next winter, and make me the happiest of mothers. Indeed, was I to fall ill here, which by the way, there is not the least danger of, I should certainly write for you to come to me in all haste, but at present I am very well. I drink like a fish every morning; I am a little like Nouveau indeed, who used to ask, *Have not I a great deal of pleasure?* So I ask, *Do not my waters work off well? Are they not right in quantity and quality? Is every thing as it should be?* I am told that I do wonders, and I believe it, because I feel it; for excepting my hands and knees, which are not quite as they should be, because I have never been pumped

pumped or bathed yet, I am as well as possibly could be wished.

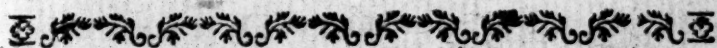
The delightfulness of our walks is beyond description, and is alone more than sufficient to restore me to my health. We are all day long together. Madame de Brissac and the *Canonness* dine here very familiarly, and as every one eats in a plain manner here, there is no shew of an entertainment at any of our tables. After that admirable farce of the cholic, we had a recovery-piece exhibited with all its concomitant languishings, short breathings, &c. which was, upon my word, worthy of the stage; but it would take up a whole volume to describe all that I have found out in this master-piece of the Gods. I pass slightly over a number of things, that I may not write too much. You make me laugh with your account of the Saint who is fallen from the skies upon you at Aix, and that they are obliged to louse every moment: he must certainly have his relicts at his fingers ends: those *living relicts*, as you call his vermin, chocked me a good deal, for as I used always to be called the living relict at St. Mary's*, I fancied I was just in Mr. Ribon's situation.

I am perfectly overwhelmed with presents by the good people here; it seems, it is the custom; indeed one may live for nothing almost: two fowls for three sols, and every thing else in

* Madame de Sévigné was called by this name among the sisters of the visitation, on account of her grand-mother, the baroness of Chantal, who founded that convent, and whom they looked upon as a saint.

proportion. There are three good men here, the whole business of whose lives is to do me service; these are Bayard, St. Herem, and la Fayette; as I frequently make you pay my debts, so I desire you will remember to mention a word or two of them in your next.

Adieu, my angel, continue to love me dearly, and be assured that you do not love an ingrate.



L E T T E R CCCXLVII.

To the Same.

Vichi, Tuesday, 28 May, 1676.

I SHOULD, by rights, receive some more Letters of your's from Paris; they will be heartily welcome, my dear, whenever they please to arrive; pray be under no concern about my health; do you know that I keep my legs, so that I can walk very well? I have a little pain still in my arms, knees, and shoulders, but the pump will remove all that. I look very well, I eat well, and I sleep well, and am so well of all my humours, that I shall continue the waters but a fortnight longer, for fear of over-heating my blood. To-morrow I begin the pump, and you may depend upon hearing regularly from me. Do not scold me for writing, it is the only pleasure I have, and I manage my time so, that it cannot hurt me. Do not deprive
me

me of any thing that regards you : you say such tender things to me, they are so good, and so true, that I can only answer them by what I feel. I repent very heartily the not having let you come hither, my poor heart is hurt by it, but when I reflect again upon your taking all that trouble to be only a week or ten days with me, I think that I shall be better pleased to see you next winter. I am so attached to you that I think I feel the pangs of separation more strongly than any other person.

I do not think to be here much above a week longer. The Dutchess will go within that time ; and the pretty *Cannoness*, she goes to Bayard's because I am to go there : he would be as well pleased to be without her : there will be a little troop of *infelici amanti*.

I have done myself credit here by the news of our sea-fight. As we wept for the Chevalier de Tambonneau, the last time he was killed, there is no occasion to do it over again, I think.

Adieu, my dearest child, take your rest in your charming castle, where I should rejoice to be this summer ; but do not speak of it to me. I never knew what it was to have virtue but on this occasion.



THE END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME